1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

standing the inconvenience of this head-gear, and the baldness which it causes, it is said to be worn even at night, little pillows being used to support it.

The dress of the peasant women is similar in form, but is invariably made of blue cotton stuffs; the *tcharakkia*, or cloak, is of a darker shade of blue, with white stripes round the bottom, the corners being knotted across the breast or shoulder; and a small cap is worn on the head, the hair curling about the face.

Though nominally Moslems, the Kûrdish women do not veil themselves very strictly when abroad. In large towns like Sulîemanieh the ladies wear a blue checked sheet, and a screen of black horsehair, like the Turkish women of the interior. This is, however, seldom pulled down, except by ladies of the highest rank, who may wish to pass through the streets *incognito*; and the lower class women generally go about with their faces uncovered. The village women veil themselves when they leave their homes; and the nomads, when on the march, partially screen their faces with a cotton kerchief or scarf. Menservants are not, as with the Turks, excluded from the rooms occupied by the ladies of the house, and male visitors are freely received by the assembled family.

Notwithstanding, however, this apparent freedom of manners, Kûrdish women conduct themselves with the utmost dignity and propriety, displaying neither the timidity common to the Armenians, nor the forwardness too often seen in the behaviour of the Osmanlis. Their standard of morality is, indeed, exceptionally high among the races of the country,

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

Not being sure of the day of his wife's return home, he had not been anxious at her non-arrival, but had been spending the evening with a party of friends. A question had arisen regarding his bravery; and, to vindicate it, he had accepted a wager to go alone at midnight to the Ilaz Khan, and leave there a token of his visit. He had been searching for a safe place in which to leave this token, unawed by the ghastly missiles hurled at him, as he supposed, by some bandits who had taken up their abode in the khan.

Mr. Rich, when travelling in Kûrdistan, met a girl of the Bulbassi tribe who had killed with a spear a Turk who insulted her. This young Amazon was dressed like a man, and served the chief, Farullah Effendi, as his faithful henchman, accompanying him on all his expeditions. The women of this tribe are particularly hardy and intrepid. They sometimes take to the road as brigands, and unlucky is the trader or traveller who falls into their hands. For not content with robbing him, they strip him, excite him to make proposals to them, and then punish him for so doing with every species of mild torture which their lively imaginations can suggest, such as pinching, scratching, and scourging with thorns.

In the domestic circle the women are treated as equals by the men, who are most affectionate in their relations with their parents, sisters, and children, and in the character of husbands most considerate, kind, and forbearing. As an illustration of this latter trait, and at the same time of manners generally among the sedentary Kûrds, I cannot do better than give the following charming story.

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

that one can well do without gold and rich stuffs, but that without soldiers one cannot maintain one's power.

The Kûrdish women, of the nomad tribes more especially, take a lively interest in the social and political affairs of the tribe, are acquainted with all that concerns it—its feuds, plans, and conspiracies, in which they are indeed often moving spirits. As enterprising and indefatigable as the men of their race, they are ever on the alert, and ready to leap to the saddle, where, though not elegant riders, they are quite at home, and able to keep up with their husbands in their adventurous wanderings.

This participation in the political life of the tribe is a peculiarity of nomad life, and of a primitive state of society. Mr. Millingen relates two instances which came under his personal notice of the intervention of women in public affairs. After a skirmish with the Shikiah tribe, the beaten Kûrds retired to their encampment, with the loss of twenty-four of their warriors, and sent with all haste a deputation to the Pasha of Van imploring his mediation. A kind of commission being despatched on their behalf from this town, it was met at a distance of several miles from the Shikiah camp by a crowd of women, the pretty ones at the head wearing black veils, and shrieking as loudly and woefully as it was in their power to do. Their lively grief, backed by a bribe of the Kûrdish delicacy called *djadjik*,[1] was successful in bringing about a solution favourable to the tribe, which, through the mediation of the women, was allowed to escape further punishment.

[1] The onion-flavoured cheese above-mentioned (p. 120).

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11

The Kūrds, too, generally leave to the women the business of settling accounts with that regular, but unwelcome, visitor, the tax-gatherer. 562 651

On the arrival on one occasion of this functionary at the camp of the Haideränlis, a large and wealthy tribe established in the plains to the north-west of Van, he was politely received and treated with black coffee and tobacco in the tent of the chief, Ali Agha, who courteously informed him that he was at liberty to enter the different tents for the collection of the sheep tax. Once in the tents, however, the tax-gatherer soon perceived that while he was striving to get hold of everything he could detect, the object of the women was to conceal from him all they could. Out of interests so opposed a collision naturally soon arose, and a shower of vituperation, followed by an attack with sticks and stones, assailed the unlucky official, who was finally rescued from the hands of these fair furies by the men of the tribe, and carried for safety to the tent of the chief. Ali Agha now gave him the friendly advice to get from the women all they were willing to give and return at once to Van, thanking Allah that no worse had befallen him. "My good fellow," he concluded, "what can you do with women? They will have their way. Take the money and be off." [272]

In 1854 there passed through Constantinople on their way to the seat of war a band of Kūrdish cavalry led by a woman named Kara ("Black") Fatmé Hanūm. Save for the dauntless fire which blazed in her eyes there was, however, nothing Amazonian in the 562 701

1: Garnett B-4, 5 (ca. 1880) 1891
MA11 Kurd MA11
Yazidis MH10

K 562 701 aspect of this female warrior, who is described as having been a little shrivelled up old woman.[1]

K 871 794 Among the nomad and peasant Kūrds, as might be expected, very little attention is paid to education. The sedentary Kūrds in Suliemanieh and other centres, are not, however, wholly uneducated, as they have Mollahs, or Doctors of Divinity, of their own nation to expound the Moslem law and teach in the colleges.

K [212] The wives and daughters of the lettered Kūrds are also taught at least to read and write Persian, which is the literary language, for Kūrdish literature is almost non-existent, notwithstanding an attempt made early in the century by some Mollahs to publish works in that language. The Kūrdish tongue

K 197 is not connected either with Persian or Turkish, and it contains as many dialects as there are tribes. Constant intercourse has, however, naturally resulted in the introduction into their idiom of a great number of

K 538 Turkish, and especially of Persian, words. Poetic feeling often manifests itself among Kūrdish women, who compose many graceful and touching songs, of which the theme is generally some social or tribal event.

Y 871 743 562 The members of the Yezidi sect, who belong to eleven different tribes, and number between seven and eight thousand families, are said to entertain a strong prejudice against learning of any kind, and their ignorance is proverbial among the people by whom they are surrounded. With the exception perhaps of the higher grades of the priestly caste, the men are consequently totally without education, and their women are naturally in a similarly benighted condition.

[1] Mordtmann, *Die Amazonen*, p. 132.

are utilized for riding. One finds here a revealing comparison with the Arab South. In such a country as Egypt it is commonplace to see a man perched on a donkey while his wife shuffles along behind on foot. In the Rowanduz district, the man walks and the woman rides, a contrast which was several times pointed out by Kurds themselves as evidence of their loftier respect for their women. Almost every village possesses a large number of watchdogs, the typical animal large and fawn-coloured, not unlike an Eskimo husky. In many cases their ears have been cut off, and there are two stories to account for this practice. One holds that it enables the dog to hear prowlers more acutely, and the other claims that the severed ears should be fed to the puppies to make them more ferocious. The town of Rowanduz is more or less taken over by its dog population at night, packs of them running without the houses and environs, often raising a disturbing uproar with their quarrels. They sometimes appear dangerous, but have great respect for a thrown stone. A Kurd approaching a farmhouse will generally equip himself with a handful of pebbles. Dogs are usually ignored after they reach maturity, fending for themselves, but puppies are fondled and made much of by both children and adults. Cats are conspicuous in their absence. It might be mentioned here that, aside from chikaw kept for fighting and dogs, the only other animals kept for amusement are ground-squirrels, carried by some in a pocket and danced on the end of a cord in the chaykhana for the diversion of other customers.

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[562]

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[825]

elicits knives). No woman of any class of society is ever seen in a chaykhana. The bus from Rowanduz to Erbil makes several stops at tea-shops. The female passengers remain within or near the bus, and refreshments are brought out to them. 265 554 [562] [494]

The restaurant is to be found in a little arcade just above the central "square." In its furnishings it differs very little from a chaykhana, and its fare does not offer the customer a wide variety of choice. One can obtain kabab (finely-cut meat moulded about a skewer and grilled), stew, boiled eggs, bread, tea, and little else, and, by popular admission, the preparation often leaves much to be desired. Almost no one residing in the town patronized the place, save as a chaykhana, and its custom was solely derived from transients in the town who could find no other place to eat. 265 [262]

The butchers operate on a contractual basis. There is no refrigeration in the town, and, particularly during the summer months, meat must be consumed a short time after the animal is killed. Hence persons desiring to make a purchase must let the butcher have their order a day in advance, in order that he will be able to estimate the number of animals necessary for slaughter. The slaughtering-place is a gravel cut in a hill behind the town with a number of posts to which the animals are tied, and the slaughtering always takes place early in the morning. The meat which is not immediately sent to private customers is 253 [251]

information, it would be difficult to assign such a house plan to any definite cultural horizon, but the architectural attempt to conceal the women is clearly Islamic, and, while it had its initial expansion under the Arabic caliphates, probably had its greatest influence in Kurdistan under the Turks when such things were carried to an extreme, at the same time reinforced by the prestige of a ruling class, in most parts of the Ottoman Empire.

The entrance of the house requires special attention, for certain important customs surround it. The doors are of heavy timbers, swinging on iron hinges, and, lacking a metal lock, are bolted at night with a heavy wooden bar which is kept in place by a second piece above it on a pivot. The outer doorway may have a fuel lamp for night and in many cases is furnished with charms designed to ward off the evil eye, a belief which will be discussed in a later section. These are characteristically a blue porcelain plate, embedded in the mud wall-surfacing, or a pair of old shoes hung on a nail. The popular reasoning behind the second device is that it indicates to a person with the eye that "your malevolent glance is as powerful as our pair of old shoes," an explanation that probably has little to do with the origin of the custom. Whenever the construction of a house is completed, the new owner sacrifices an animal, a sheep or a goat, by cutting its throat before the door and smears some of the blood on the doorposts and the threshhold. Often he dips his hand in the blood, and applies it to the door, making by

fifteen minutes. Refreshments are prepared by the women 574
and are carried in by a male servant or one of the children.
A young woman, either of the family or a servant, never enters
the guest-room, particularly in the presence of a plurality [576] [562] [888]
of male guests, but older women, if the mistresses of the
house and of aristocratic lineage, may enter and chat with
the visitors. The investigator was entertained by Lali Khan [123]
and Bayin Amina, the Turkish wife of Shakir Effendi, both
unveiled and neither of European education or inclination.
Visiting women, almost always married and related in some
way to the house, are entertained in the sleeping rooms or
in the courtyard at large, for some confusion might obtain
in the diwankhana if the house-owner and a male guest should
suddenly appear. Finally, this room is infrequently used
for mixed family gatherings, say, the visit of an uncle,
in which men, women, and children take part.

In this connection it is convenient to mention the 351
gardens, because, wholly aside from whatever productive [574]
value they might possess, they are used, just as the guest-
room, for the reception of visitors in summer. It is the
desire of every householder, as an American might plan a
study, a recreation room, or, indeed, the same thing, to
have one on his property. A "garden" need not refer to
beds of flowers or vegetables, but rather to a secluded,
grassy plot shaded by trees, and the intense romantic
attachment of the Kurd, or of almost anyone in the Middle
East, to these places is defined with difficulty, a senti-
ment by no means confined to the intellectual or the wealthy.

open sleeves and the skirt dropping to the ankles are put on, although in the case of village women only one or two outer dresses, usually dark blue in colour, are used. For a headdress, the peasant wife, and, to a certain extent, townswomen of the poorer houses, have a cap combined with a turban for everyday use. The cap, mentioned above as embroidered on a loose piece of cloth and stitched together by the purchaser, is of the "pill-box" rather than the hemispherical shape. The turban, in contrast to that of the men, is permanently sewn to it, and is also a dark blue in colour, a single roll of cloth. 291

The matter of the veil requires some discussion, a restriction which, of course, has no existence among the women themselves and immature children. In general, Kurdish women of the upper class may only appear uncovered before the men of their family, and, if of sufficient age and dignity, to male friends of the house. On the other hand, women of the villages, faced with the exigencies of their life, working in the fields and going to market, are always unveiled and a trip to the bazar crowded with men affords them no discomfort. However, the appearance of a socially prominent or alien person may cause them to hide their heads. Brazenness, deprecated by many of the men, disappears in a moment, perhaps in some fear of the evil eye. Save in the case of an older woman of aristocratic lineage, the sustained glance of a stranger will cause almost any rural Kurdish woman, no matter what her rank, to turn away or to run. The veil, associated with the upper classes, is also 291 562 [754] [576] [609]

a matter of social status, and many women, flattering themselves, will hide their faces although their station does not warrant it, to the amusement and sometimes the respect of others. One noticed from a distance that an elderly woman of the lower class turned against a wall and concealed her face from Mashid Agha of Jindian. "The old fool," he said, "she thinks herself still a girl." The townswomen of wealthier houses never appear in the streets unveiled; and the old, heavy covering of Ottoman times has been replaced completely by the lighter pacha, derived from the Arab cities. This garment is easily formed by knotting together two corners of a large piece of black cloth so as to make a tight circle at one end in the dimension of the head. This circle is placed around the skull with the knot at the nape of the neck and the whole cloth is tossed backwards, covering the hair and hanging down over the shoulders and back. The forward edges can be controlled with the hands and drawn across the face whenever necessary. Within their homes, most women use a simple headcloth, usually of white gauze, which falls over the shoulders and hangs to the waist, and, just as the men, are infrequently without something on their heads. Among the Kurds, however, it is a much greater shame for a girl to have her legs observed by a stranger than her face.

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The rich garments of a wedding or the festival, particularly in wealthy houses, are of much the same type, with the addition of a few items and the better quality of

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the materials. Here bright colours are worn, typically deep reds and blues, and a number of chemises, skirts, and aprons make up the costume. A white blouse and a tight jacket with long sleeves are often seen. For a headdress, the headcloth in white and in coloured silks is found, as well as a cap to which a circular disk, the qurs, some five inches in diameter, of embossed gold or silver has been sewn and around which a turban of silk is affixed. This last is one of a woman's dearest possessions, and the qurs, refitted with cap and turban whenever necessary, is either bestowed on a favorite daughter or kept until death. Whether or not a woman "dresses up" each day depends very much on her own personality. In some houses of the wealthy, the mistress wears only a simple print frock and the white headcloth, while in others, sometimes of lower station, the wife is always resplendent in a multiplicity of garments and jewelry. The servants of Lali Khan, herself in perpetual mourning, are always "dressed for a wedding." In cold weather women of any class do not use a coat, but add undergarments and a shawl. 292

The wives of government personnel, who are for a large part Arabs, have the same social origins as their husbands, the educated middle and upper class families of Iraq. Some of the officials are unaccompanied by their spouses, and those of lower rank, the mudirs, the junior army officers, and the teachers, are usually unmarried. Nevertheless a number of these women are resident in the 554 562

town, and have a certain amount of influence on its social life. An interesting phenomenon is to be observed here, for the officials and officers, who are far more European in certain respects than the Kurdish populace, are more illiberal in their concept of women, particularly in a rural setting in which gossip enjoys considerable power. Masculine friends of a Kurdish home might meet its mistress socially, but in Rowandus the best friend of an official, no matter what his derivation or status, can visit a house regularly for a matter of years and never catch sight of the wife in question. Whenever these women appear on the streets they are closely veiled in black from head to toe, and are never seen uncovered by any save their husbands and other women. The young medical officer, trained in Lebanon and otherwise thoroughly cosmopolitan, was peculiarly adamant on this point. It must be noticed that under their veils these wives wear garments which are no different from those of their sisters in Europe or America. It is interesting to see one of them walking, shrouded completely in shapeless black, and in the ten or twelve inches between veil and ground to observe nylon stockings and fashionable high-heeled sandals.

Many women go barefoot in their homes, and their footwear includes European models, some simple slippers, and the kabkabs. These last are smooth wooden clogs, raised slightly at the heels, with leather straps for the toes, and, after hair-pulling, are the favored weapons in a feminine brawl. Women of the villages or poorer families

will offer a flower to a guest and the latter is expected to enjoy it for a short time by holding it to his nostrils before passing it to another. Young Kurdish dandies, not, however, in Rowanduz, hold flowers to their faces on the streets of Baghdad or Mosul to circumvent the smells of the metropolis. Perfume of any sort, probably because of its association with women, is abhorrent to Muslim puritans, of whom there are a few in the town, and they avoid it with violent gestures and condemnation.

Because the ablutions before prayers, with some reservation, apply to Muslims of both sexes, it is equally difficult to obtain an exact idea of the bathing habits of the townswomen. Unmarried girls are supposed to wash themselves completely twice or three times each week during the summer and once or twice each fortnight in colder weather. All of the hair of a woman's body must be removed: the pubic hair with a razor, that under the arms with the fingers, and the rest with a depilatory concocted of sugar and gum arabic. In addition, the ankles and feet are rubbed with a small piece of black stone. Both men and women clean the teeth with their fingers, pieces of rag, or European toothbrushes. The hair of a woman's head, on the other hand, is almost never cut or trimmed, and its length and richness are thought to be outstanding attributes of feminine beauty. Whenever two women quarrel, one often cries out "your hair will be cut," a promise of great catastrophe for her opponent.

mentioned. Precious stones and pearls are little in 301
evidence, but coins, of almost any age and variety, are often drilled and included in the ensembles. The silver khizam or nose-ring, sometimes containing a piece of turquoise, is only affected by women of the villages. Many married couples wear rings, usually of silver and sometimes set with a piece of coloured glass, on the third or fourth finger of the right hand, but they are not a necessary part of engagement or marriage. Men wear little jewelry save a ring and a few sport a silver or imitation gold watch-fob hanging from a breast pocket. [562]
There is some aversion on the part of men to wearing gold, and this is said to have a background in Islamic tradition. The elegant seal-rings of Medieval and Ottoman [212]
times have almost completely disappeared, except in a few of the older families, such as that of Ra'uf Effendi, where they are preserved as heirlooms.

It has been seen that the townspeople have little 276
regard for intoxicants, nor do they make use of drugs such as the opium of Iran to the east or the hashish of Lebanon and Syria to the west. If there are excesses among the natives of Rowanduz, they are only tea-drinking and smoking, the first of which has been discussed. Cigarettes are the most popular mode of consuming tobacco, and have several varieties. From the merchants British cigarettes and those made in the factories of Baghdad may be obtained. The officials and officers habitually use these, and they are

of generosity. Commoners are not in a position to quarrel with a chieftain, and the problem was usually solved in this way. The youth was summoned and kissed the hand of his reluctant father-in-law, addressing him as a parent. If, however, the fugitive couple belonged to aristocratic houses, the most sanguine of vendettas could follow. 622 628 584

The integrity of its women is perhaps the primary facet of a family's honor. If a Kurd insults anything other than the woman of his opponent, he is in danger of being slain himself. If, however, he seriously questions the honor of a woman, the latter must be killed by her relatives, never the accuser. The accusation is thus extremely dangerous, and, although it is sometimes heard in joking exchanges, a serious enunciation cannot be taken lightly. The honor of a man depends very much on that of his female relatives, and the primary rule in this second regard is that no woman, unmarried or married, can have unseemly traffic, specifically intercourse, with any other person than her husband. If a bride cannot demonstrate her virginity, she can be returned to her relatives who are obligated to slay her, although she is not thus sent to them in every case. Similarly, if there is an accusation of adultery, a wife can be directed to the same fate. The woman, it might be said, is always the offender. It follows that if a woman errs in this way and is detected, she must flee, either to a chieftain or 577 562 554 [684] [585] 684 562

to the great cities, and even in these places she feels far from secure. While this concept is common to families of any class of society, it reaches its apogee among those of the aristocracy. If the daughter of a commoner runs away, he may be unable or unwilling to do anything about it, but a chieftain, as the personification of his people's honor, is more or less bound to exact justice. Thus insulting the integrity of a noblewoman can also result in violence. 684 562 628 683 622

Finally, hospitality is a necessary concomitant of a chieftain's honor, and an ideal of all. "To be a chieftain," it was said, "a man must belong to a noble house, must be followed by armed men, and must have a guest-room." Hence the aristocratic houses maintain diwankhanas which very considerably in size and form according to their estates. In some cases it is only a few rooms within the house and in others a separate building. Some chieftains have large tents pitched as guest-rooms in the summer. In furnishings and service the aristocratic guest-room does not differ from that described in the preceding section, and the distinction between it and the diwankhana of, say, a wealthy merchant, is that it must always be open to strangers, no matter what their station in life. Strictly speaking, the rule of hospitality applies to any Kurdish house, but, outside of emergencies, its usual application is among the aristocrats. One of the functional aspects of the support of the chieftainship appears here. A poor villager cannot entertain a stranger in sumptuous fashion, 574 622 [342] [343]

any technical device within their means have been assimilated with alacrity. European and American medical goods are eagerly sought, and there is almost a childlike faith in the wonders of the Western World. "We can," said an agha, "make of this area a Switzerland of the Middle East." The less well-informed, whose knowledge only extends to the Mediterranean, say the same thing, having reference to Lebanon. Insofar as family life is concerned, the Kurds, comparing themselves to the Arabs, point with pride to their "more enlightened" treatment of women in terms of the veil and social intercourse, but one is dubious of any wider extent of this liberality. In short, the Kurdish aristocracy represents an extremely active class, untroubled by most aspects of Westernization, but weakened by their own dissentions and threatened by the encroachment of a new government. It seems impossible, in view of so many variables, to predict whether or not they will be able to maintain their integrity.

Inasmuch as they represent the first system in which the only significant division is between aristocrat and commoner, the Kurdish chieftains of the Rowanduz area are often uneducated and wear the national costume as it has been described in the preceding section. Only a moderate number from this group have obtained higher education and have subsequently entered the government service. Many, indeed, are illiterate and have no knowledge of Arabic, the language of the government. In Rowanduz only three aristocratic houses are represented, those of Isma'il

of a college or university education and the relative degree of Westernization. The officials and officers are all graduates of colleges or academies, either in Iraq or abroad, where many usages of Western civilization are often literally enforced on them by their fellow students. It would be difficult to describe fully the details of this influence, but it may be summed up in what, with certain reservations and qualifications, they consider to be the dress, mannerisms, and thought of a Western gentleman. Thus they wear European clothing, indulge in gaming and drinking (which, one might note, despite Islam, are by no means strangers to the region of the Middle East, save that in this case specifically European forms are encountered), and, in general, try to comport themselves in their work and in masculine society as their models abroad. There are a large number of reservations, a few of which may be enumerated here. The attitude of an Arab official or officer toward his womenfolk, in a rural setting, is, if anything, more stringent than that of the local aristocrats. None of the officials would consider appearing before other males nakes[1] or "indecently" clothed, and almost all consider European toilet habits filthy in the extreme, water being thought far more hygenic than tissue. A large part of the passion for Westernization stems from a sincere desire, as they envisage it, to better their country, while in others it amounts to pure snobbery. In the latter category, one can often hear officials, speaking

565 647 177 [183] [562] [834] [514] [192]

[1] [should read: naked. —Analyst]

sometimes, alcoholic beverages, and light refreshments, such as nuts, bread, and grilled meat. Activity begins at four or five in the afternoon, and, should a card party be in session, can remain open into the early hours of the morning. The rooms and garden are illuminated with lanterns, and at times an official or officer will loan a battery-operated radio for entertainment. Aside from gambling, however, the principle diversion is conversation, the men seating themselves in little groups according to their preferences. The conversationalists usually depart for their homes between nine and ten o'clock in the evening, one of the servants often accompanying them through the darkened streets with a lantern. Although not nominally members, persons of the aristocratic Kurdish class occasionally appear in the club, sitting by themselves or with some official of their acquaintance. It has been related how Sayyid Ahmad and Karim Agha were visitors in the course of an evening, but such appearances are by no means common, nor do the aristocrats indulge in gambling. As has been said, the officials and officers, unless they are Kurds, do not visit the houses of chieftains. No woman is ever seen in the club.

Aside from the month of Ramadan, during which most assume the appearance of piety, the chief entertainments of the higher officials and officers are drinking and gambling. The drinking-party has been described in a previous section, and is usually associated with a game of cards.

tempt God to bring destruction to the owner. In the case of smaller articles, it is more or less mandatory for the owner to present the item in question to the admirer as a gift. A large number of cigarette-lighters, rosaries, walking-sticks, and the like change hands in exactly this fashion. The second is much more marked, the exhibition of deference to a superior or an equal. This can be seen in two persons of equal standing who wish to enter a room, for they will stand before the door, bowing each other in, until one seizes the other by the arm and makes him precede by main force. The same is true of refreshments or tobacco. If one official produces cigarettes, the second will bring out his own and a wrangle usually ensues until there is an exchange. An identical process is gone through in lighting the tobacco, often with grotesque attitudes as two men hold out lighted matches for each other's cigarettes. The Kurdish populace, aristocrats and commoners, are less punctilious in these matters than the officials, and suffer less inconvenience.

To this point the greater part of these remarks have been largely pertinent to masculine society alone, and the investigator confesses to some failing in treating that of women. There are, it seems, certain aspects of feminine society on which the townsmen themselves cannot speak with authority, a deficit of information which could easily be filled by an observer of the female sex. However, it is possible to make a number of valid observations which must

suffice until further investigation is able to furnish a more complete account. Save in the lowest classes of society, mature women, those of the officials and officers, the aristocrats, and the wealthier townmen, are generally restricted to the interior of their houses, and none can mix freely with society at large. It is more or less inevitable that such women have their friends and visitors among the female relatives of their fathers' and husbands' families, for only these can visit each other's houses without restriction. Because marriages are arranged between persons on a basis of comparable status, a woman's friends, like those of her husband, are close to her in rank. However, women of the upper classes are much more democratic in most respects in their demeanor toward inferiors of the same sex than their husbands are toward theirs, and spend long hours in intimate conversation with female servants, seamstresses and laundresses. The latter are, in fact, an important link with the outside world of the town, inasmuch as they are able to intermingle with others of the lower classes and hence provide the mistress of a wealthy household with welcome news and gossip. The lot of the wives of the officials and officers is much more difficult, because their friends and relatives have been left elsewhere in Iraq, and there is almost no means of making new acquaintances in the town. They, too, find pleasure in the conversation of their maids, Arab or Kurd, and, with the knowledge of the husbands concerned, may visit

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common practice. The wife of an official can be extremely lonely as far as feminine companionship is concerned. Townswomen of the lower classes suffer no such inconveniences, and associate with each other with great freedom. There is a mosque for women alone in the town, frequented by those of the lower classes, and is said by the townsmen to be used more as a clearing-house for idle talk than for pious exercises. [946] [521]

If the society of adults in Rowanduz has its hierarchy, there is a very real, but short-lived, democracy for the children. The youngsters of all, officials, aristocrats, and townspeople, play with each other without any reference to the ranks of their parents, and choose their leaders in the same way. The son of a servant can be "chieftain" over his fellows, and the daughter of a laborer the arbiter of her playmates. This stage passes without any apparent difficulty as the exigencies of life call them to different tasks, some to school and others to work in their fathers' shops. New friendships, better fitted to the demands of relative status, replace those of childhood. It need not be thought, however, that these early alliances do not extend into later life, although such acquaintances do not visit each other's homes. [572]

In concluding this section, it is possible to relate the society of Rowanduz not only to that of the town in Ottoman times, but to Iraq and the Middle East at large, and to present several observations of some importance.

formulated in the presence of the judge and registered with a kâtib al-'adil or government notary, either of the serai or the court. If a person dies intestate, as in the case of most persons of the lower classes, and a quarrel ensues over the disposition of his property, this must also be settled by court action. In general, however, each of the sons of the deceased is entitled to one share and each of the daughters to a half-share, after the widow has received a stipulated eighth of the total property. In the absence of some of these heirs, certain relatives in a fixed order may present claims for varying percentages, a subject too complicated to be examined in detail here. If the heir is an orphan, the property is administered by a department of the government, the Amwal al-Gasarin, until he reaches maturity. A woman usually disposes of her property, her dowry, jewelry, and household goods, as she pleases, although this too can be brought to the bar. Thus the quarrels and complications which can arise in inheritance are settled by action of the judge, and the townspeople themselves, unless they have been engaged in such a suit, know little of the intricacies.

Two of the most striking features of Islamic inheritance are that a woman, although she is protected by certain specified percentages, does not receive a sum equal to that of a man, and that the estate of the deceased is not transferred intact to any one person, as in primogeniture, but is parcelled out among the several heirs,

his lifetime, but it is difficult to see, in view of the 423
inexorable character of the civil code reinforced by 428
scripture, how one heir might be completely cut off in
favor of another, and no examples could be elicited. If 428
a man wished to disinherit all his relatives, a doubtful
event, he could do this best by leaving his property to
the Islamic faith, making of it a waqf or pious bequest,
a legacy which is just as hard to get around as the
equality of the claims of sons.

The bulk of the estate, animals, houses, land, 421
tools, or capital, is commonly owned by males, although 562
there is no reason why a woman cannot possess them as well.
Lali Khan, since the death of Isma'il Beg and the imprison-
ment of her closest male relatives, offers a case in
point. Generally speaking, however, the outstanding
property of most women consists of a dowry, jewelry, and
household goods. The dowry (mahr, from Arabic) in the 583
generality of Islamic society, and at Rowanduz, is paid in 421
money by the bridegroom to the father or guardian of the
girl. It consists of two parts, the muqaddam and the
mu'akhar, stipulated in the contract of marriage. The
first, a half or two-thirds of the total amount, is paid
in cash at the time the marriage contract is signed to
the parent of the bride who is responsible for its admini-
stration. The second part, the remainder of the sum, must [586]
be paid to the woman if she is divorced against her will
or widowed. As might be expected, it is not required for

a noun precedes its genitive and is inflected, for example, 601
<u>khushki mard</u>, "sister of husband," rather than <u>mardkhushk</u>. 193
This last series of observations is not that of the investi- 197
gator himself, but were offered informally by E. M. McCarus, a linguist who has made the Kurdish language the subject of an extensive study.

In approaching relationships within the <u>mal</u> or 554
"house," several things must be emphasized in order that a 577
proper perspective may be gained. The first of these is 602
the question of family honor. Personal honor, for example, in cases in which a man might acquire a reputation as a liar, a thief, a weakling, or the like, seems always to be dwarfed by the larger matter of family honor, and, as noticed in the section treating society, this is closely connected with that of the household's women. This is measured in two 562 ●
regards, whether or not the woman has been chaste prior to [836]
her marriage and whether or not she remains faithful to [837]
her husband after it. One of its several expressions, for
woman of the upper strata of society, the townswomen of [565]
wealthier homes and the wives of the aristocrats and [291]
officials, is the wearing of the veil. Such women are required to conceal their faces, if not their persons, from those unrelated or not intimately known to their families. The women of the lower classes are unveiled, but even then are not permitted extended traffic, such as lengthy conversations, with males unknown to their husbands. The decorum demanded of women serves to orient relationships within and without the household. Coupled with this

is the concept of the inequality of male and female, the second held to be a necessary but weak and volatile component of the scheme of things. The Kurds, as suggested above, claim to hold their women in greater respect than the Arabs, but it is doubtful that this might be carried to the extent known in Europe or America without considerable opposition. In the agricultural villages of the district, the wives and daughters enjoy much greater social equality, inasmuch as they are partners with the men in working in the fields, than in Rowanduz, where the work of man, for example, the trade of the smith or the merchant, is considered impossible or shameful for females. It is thus that, although a man may be discomfitted by being known as cowardly, miserly, or impious, the two worst catastrophes that can overtake the honor of the mal are the murder of one of its members or the indiscretion of its women. In popular theory, the murderer or one of his relatives in the first case must be sought out and slain, and, in the second, the woman in question must be done away with.

562 [462] 558 628 577

The second thing necessary to notice is the almost incredible emphasis placed on a male heir. Every man, no matter what his station in life, desires a son, and, this wish granted, extends it to include a grandson. "A grandfather prays to God to let him live long enough to see his grandson," one was informed, and one of the most heartbreaking events is the death of a son or grandson. It has been noted how Ra'uf Effendi considered a second marriage

842 558 [603]

to replace the boy he had lost. Women share as much as their husbands in this desire. Lali Khan was so stricken by the death of Isma'il Beg, her son, that she made her mourning perpetual. If, for some reason, a man has no son, he often turns to those of his brother or sister, showering them with affection and gifts. Girls, of course, share in the love of their parents and do not receive treatment which would cause them to be too jealous of their brothers, but never acquire the standing of a male. The sarcophagus of Isma'il Beg has flowers placed next to it daily, and an animal, whose flesh is distributed to the poor, is slaughtered in his memory almost every week. In contrast, the son of Shakir Effendi pointed out the grave of his daughter who had died in infancy to visitors by throwing a pebble at it.

The third emphasis is that placed on seniority within the family. The male usually takes precedence over the female, and the eldest does the same over those younger than himself. Thus the children, both boys and girls, must observe respect toward their elder brothers and sisters, parents, uncles, aunts, and grandparents.

Turning now to a more exact delineation of the relationships within the mal, little more has been done than to rephrase and combine several of the narratives recorded. The first question which might be treated is that of parents and their children. The relationship between a father and his son, as one might suspect from the foregoing, is one of the most important to the former,

or guest-room, apart from all of the women of the house. 604 574

The eldest brother occupies a position over his brothers and sisters analogous to that of the father. He shares to some extent in the parental authority and is responsible for the house when the father is absent. Often he is entrusted with money from which he gives his younger brothers their roxhana, "daily allowance," a sum which increases in size with their years. The children are taught [454] to save this money in a box, and whenever the eldest brother makes a journey to Erbil or a similar place he takes their savings and purchases them something they desire. Like that of the father, his word is law and all of his directions must be carried out by those junior to him without altercation. Whenever he enters the room, the younger children are supposed to stand, although this is not invariably done. If the eldest of the children is a girl, she has much the same authority as a boy, without, however, the formalities mentioned above. She is usually the chief helper of her mother in housework and the care of the younger children. In several families observed in which the eldest was a girl, the brothers disobeyed or teased her only at the risk of being punished. There seems to be little of a hierarchy among the younger brothers and sisters, and it cannot be said, as it sometimes is in America, that the youngest is the darling of the family, save in the case in which he is the first boy. The boys learn very early to be jealous of their sisters' honor, not only in protecting them in the usual quarrels 593 554 577

other on the cheek. Women of the upper classes are much more restricted. If unmarried adults, they cannot ordinarily visit a strange house, and most of their friends are thus derived from among their female relatives. It has been seen that the maids are welcome confidants of wealthy women. When married, they are able to accompany their husbands to alien houses, the latter going to the diwankhana with the men while the women gather in one of the rooms. Women of lower station enjoy much greater freedom, talking with their neighbors out of doors and making use of the women's mosque. After reaching a marriageable age, there is no question of public friendship between boys and girls. If a youth wishes to speak to some maiden, the affair must take place with the greatest secrecy and there are only rare opportunities for such exchanges.

Turning now to the course of an individual of Rowanduz through life, a person belonging to a family of moderate wealth, birth may be examined first. When a pregnant woman nears the moment of her delivery, a number of women, usually her relatives and friends, attend her in one of the rooms of her husband's house. The expectant father, other male relatives and friends, are not allowed to enter the place of delivery, but wait in the diwankhana or guest-room. A woman who can read from the Quran is called, and when she enters all of the attendants rise. She is seated in a corner of the room and recites in a loud voice while the labor progresses. If such a reader is not available, a copy of the Quran is placed beside the woman in labor.

dowry withheld until this time, and a new contract must be signed if the pair are to come together again. In the major separation, that of triple divorce, the woman also receives the mu'akhar and her personal possessions. A certain length of time, the idda, corresponding roughly to three menstrual periods, must elapse, and, if the woman becomes pregnant during it, her former husband is responsible for the maintenance of herself and the child. Children usually remain with the mother in divorce, but their father may claim them after they have reached a certain age. In addition to divorce, a husband may go to the court or the mulla with witnesses, and obtain a certificate that his wife has been "refractory," in which case he is entitled to "put her away." A woman can only initiate divorce proceedings with difficulty, and is usually forced to renounce her dowry. She also may obtain a certificate of "refractory" behavior for herself and by this means leave her husband, although the latter, from perversity, may later refuse to grant her a divorce. There are, as one might expect, a host of legal subtleties in these cases, and, as an extensive body of Islamic jurisprudence deals with them, there is no need to treat them in detail here. 586 [843] [851] [562]

The principal causes of divorce in Rowanduz are incompatability and barrenness. In the first case, the judge or mulla and the relatives of the pair attempt to reconcile them, because, for the relatives, financial transactions of a large scale, sometimes embarrassing, usually

put on dark coloured clothing, black or deep blue. For most persons, an annual visit to the grave is required, and at this time a sheep is sacrificed and its flesh distributed to the poor. Wealthier persons may enjoy weekly visits and sacrifices, and those of the lower classes must often ignore even the yearly sacrifice. The funerals of women and children, depending on the status of their husbands or fathers, are conducted with less ostentation. There is no definite pattern of commemoration, weekly or annual, and, in answer to the inquiry, it was always said that these memorial parties of both men and women visited the grave "as long as all shall live."

The cemetery of Rowandux occupies the flat crest of the hill behind the town, and is dominated by a large oak tree, one of the few in the area, a point which will be encountered again. The graves are oriented in parallel lines with their heads pointed to the northwest. Most are oblong mounds plastered with mortar rising about a foot above the surface of the ground with a crudely hewn slab of stone, several feet in height, at each end. In some cases, the headstone of one serves as the foot of the next. Only a few have inscriptions, some etched and others carved in relief, and there was only one sarcophagus in the graveyard, a box of stone slabs bound with metal clasps and elaborately carved decorations. Family burial plots are separated by low fences of interlaced thorn. Two graves were surrounded by a low, quadrilateral rubble wall, indicating the grave of a sayyid, a descendant of

which the mu'azzin calls the townspeople to prayer. To 346
the right of the porch, on the street leading up through [312] [515]
the bazar, is a pump, in 1951 in disrepair, for those
desirous of praying in the mosque to make their ablutions.

The great mosque resembles those classical examples to be found in the cities of the Middle East in general aspect, and differs from them in certain ways.[1] It boasts no minaret or tower from which the mu'azzin might give his call, and does not have an interior courtyard containing a tank or fountain of water for purification. More importantly, [529]
it is used by many of the townsmen as a sort of club, and [521]
one may find a number of them in the hours between prayers, seated or lying on the carpets of the main room, discussing purely mundane matters. In addition to the wearing of shoes, [784]
smoking and taking refreshment are forbidden within the mosque, as are animals or immature children. Strangers may [513] [485]
sleep on its floor at night if they wish. It is commonly held that the restriction of the mosque to religious exercises, as in those of the cities, was a result of Ottoman influence, and it is interesting to find its secular uses preserved in Rowanduz. The other three mosques in the town are nondescript rubble buildings with flat mud roofs. One 346 562
of these, the women's mosque, is found above the bazar near the civil officials' club, and is notorious in town life [521]
as a center for gossip. Men are not permitted to enter it. 554
Both townsmen and the chieftains make use of the mosques 346 771

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[1] Mazaheri, 1951, pp. 14-17.

whenever they feel inclined, but members of the government elite avoid them. The wives and daughters of wealthier households rarely visit the women's mosque, perhaps because in some matters the women are far less democratic than the men. 346 554 771 [562]

It is commonly said that Islam has no priesthood, but at least one author has written an entire volume to disprove this thesis.[1] The functions of the mulla in Rowanduz serve to support the latter view, for they are extremely similar to those of a Christian divine. The mullas in Rowanduz have no other occupation, and are supported by funds provided by the townspeople. They are responsible for the maintenance of the mosque and the administration of awqaf, bequests to the faith. They conduct the services in the mosque, and officiate at such occasions as the naming of a child, circumcision, betrothal, and death. They have certain judicial powers, as noted in connection with divorce. On the other hand, they are not formally ordained, nor are they subordinate to any higher authority, although they may, if they choose, be attentive to such figures as, say, the Shaykh of Islam in Egypt or the Mufti of Jerusalem. There were three mullas in Rowanduz in 1951, of whom the unofficial leader was Mulla 'Abd al-Karim Effendi, in charge of the great mosque and the control of awqaf. 793 [693]

There is no standard pattern for achieving the priestly office. In Kurdish Iraq a youth who has chosen [874]

[1] Zwemer, 1946.

specialist and which can provide the material for broader analyses of the economics, society, or religion of the Middle East. The value of investigation undertaken in a particular town or locale is obvious. Too often the student of the ethnology of the Middle East is forced to glean his information from the chance remarks and anecdotes of administrators, missionaries, and travelers. If such a writer happens to comment on the wedding customs of one village, and, several pages later, notices the funeral rites of another, one cannot legitimately infer that marriage and burial are the same in both villages. A body of this type of material exists for the Kurds themselves, but it has not been thought necessary to have reference to it. One cannot take some engineer or missionary to task for an observation, seemingly incorrect, which cannot be identified with reference to a definite locale, nor does there appear to be much value in noticing their accuracies. The dangers of generalization are marked, for example, Driver, who notes:

> Kurdish women are comparatively free to come and go as they like; they are wooed and won by open courtship, for in almost all tribes they are unveiled.[1]

This statement, as has been seen for Rowanduz, is not valid. It has also been felt that a detailed comparison of life in Rowanduz with that of other groups in the Middle East would be worth little, for the student has at his disposal comprehensive, localized treatments only of the Arab Bedouin, the Egyptian peasantry, and certain peoples of North Africa.

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[1] Driver, 1922, p. 502.

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

195 by Kurds, including the northern, mountainous part of the Mosul Vilayet. The idea was crystallized in
698 Article 62 (delimitation of the area) and Article 64 of the Peace Treaty[5], which, however, was never ratified. At the final conclusion of peace at Lausanne in 1923, a shattered, mutilated Turkey no longer existed, but instead a strong young republic under Kemal Atatürk, and all idea of an autonomous Kurdish state was abandoned. The whole of the Mosul Vilayet with its rich oil fields around Kirkuk was placed under Iraq, which in 1922 was made a kingdom under Faisal I, the son of the Shereef of Mecca, but still under British mandate until 1932. The frontier between Iraq and Turkey was fixed along the Brussels or Branting line[6] by negotiations between Turkey, Iraq and Great Britain at Ankara in 1926. The justifiably disappointed Kurds, who had seen their dream of an independent Kurdistan born at Sèvres and killed at Lausanne, had aired their feelings by repeated national revolts in Turkey[7], Iran[8] and in Iraq. Whereas the Mosul Vilayet was "disputed territory"[9], the British mandate government appointed Sheikh Mahmud (b. 1861, d. 1956)[10] *hukmdar* in Sulaimani, the provincial capital in the Sulaimani Liwa, with guaranteed subsidies. When he became too troublesome for the mandate government, proclaiming himself *mdlik*, king, of Kurdistan, he was replaced in 1919 by Major E. B. Soane[11], who as early as 1906 had accepted Islam and by his great knowledge of Kurdistan over many years was closely in touch with the Kurds. The first Kurdish paper[12] was started on Sept. 20th 1920, and at the same time Kurdish became for the first time the official language of the Administration. However, Soane was recalled to England in 1921 as his wish for an independent Kurdistan no longer conformed to the attitude created towards the end of the peace negotiations at Lausanne. Sheikh Mahmud was once more appointed, which resulted in revolts under his leadership in 1922-24, 1927 and in 1930-31, and under Achmad of Barzan in 1932. For the political development in these years see Longrigg and Stoakes[13], and Edmonds[14].

184 My personal impression of political conditions amongst the Kurds I lived with in 1957 can be sum-
698 marized as follows: The Iraqi Kurds in a town like Sulaimani, the intellectual capital of Southern Kurdistan, look to the north, to Soviet Russia[15]. It was stated that the small group of Kurds living under the Soviet Union had better facilities to retain their lingual and cultural independence than the Kurds (about one million) in Arab Iraq. In Tashkent, for example, a Kurdish university was said to have been opened. Despite the fact that Beirut University in Lebanon had hitherto always been the place at which well-to-do young Kurds studied, and the Hoybun Committee[16] still existed, the Kurds, whilst I was in Iraqi Kurdistan, looked to the north, to Communism, and hoped that their dream of an independent Kurdistan would some day be realised from that quarter.

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562 What has previously been written about Kurdish women comes from the pens of men. Having given
291 the following description of the Arab women in Baghad: "... visions in dark blue with black masks, which slip about in little yellow boots, and which you are told are women," adding: "... in fact no better disguise than these hideous shrouds ... could have been invented by Oriental jealousy to scare away prying eyes and damp the spirit of libertinism ..."[17] Fraser, 1840, says concerning the Kurdish women that "... they do not wear veils like the Persian women, the utmost practised in this way being to bring the end of the handkerchief, with which their heads are covered, across their mouths

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Fig. 1. Village aristocracy. Married women fetching vine leaves. Serkan.

and chins ..."[18]. However, he goes on: "The women of the richer classes living in towns, remain in the harems of their husbands or fathers, and veil when they go abroad"[19]. He thus distinguishes between conditions in towns and villages. He further adds— "... but I regret that it is little in my power to follow them into their privacy, and describe them in their domestic duties"[20], in which he shares the fate of all male investigators visiting Islamic areas.

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[123]

Concerning the position of Kurdish women in Persia, Bleibtreu, 1894, writes: "Die Frauen tragen keinen Schleier und geniessen mehr Freiheiten als bei den meisten andern morgenländischen Völkern"[21]. The same is repeated by Rambout 1947; "La femme est considérée chez les Kurds, comme l'égale de l'homme. Elle n'est pas astreinte à porter le voile"[22]. Soane maintains that the veil is quite unknown among the Kurds[23], that "the wife has a remarkable freedom", as "the women are practically as free as in any European country except that they do not go to the bazaar"[24]. In the same way he stresses that the Kurds in central and southern Kurdistan give the wife "a manlier treatment ... than is seen among Musulman races"[25]. He furnishes similar information when he says: "The Kurds treat their womenfolk with much more respect than do most Mohammedan races. Only the chiefs

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keep their wives in seclusion, and this practice has quite recently sprung up being due to Turkish influence ..."[26]. And Edmonds writes: "Many travellers before 1914 recorded their impression that Kurdish women enjoyed in general a good deal more freedom than their Arab, Turkish and Persian sisters"[27]. In regard to marriage and the polygyni sanctioned by the Coran and known in other Muslim areas, Soane[28] declares that: "The Kurd from north to south is monogamous" adding:[29] "free intercourse between the sexes is the rule, and the result is a large number of love marriages ...".

It is fact that the individual Kurdish woman of the upper class has, in situations difficult for the Kurdish people, sprung into the limelight, which seems incompatible with the view adopted concerning woman's restricted possibilities of action in Muslim areas, but may possibly be due to the prominent position of their families[30]. Khanem Osman Pasha, Lady Adila of Halabja[31] of the Ardalan Vazir family, married to Osman Pasha of the Begzada family, is the best known case. Her husband, towards the end of the Turkish period, was made the *qā'im maqām* in Halabja. Even whilst he was alive all effective authority passed to his wife. In 1910 Major Soane lived as a servant with her son, Tahir Beg, after Soane had accepted Islam in 1906 and, under the name of Mirza Ghulam Husain Shirazi, travelled in these areas in disguise. Later, under the British mandate after 1918, it was she, now a widow, with whom the British political officers negotiated. Her personality must have been

Fig. 2. Village aristocracy. Married woman at the garden basin. Serkan.
Fig. 3. Village aristocracy. Married woman making cigarettes. Serkan. (See p. 18).

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Fig. 4. Peasant woman baking bread on circular iron sheet. Balkha. (See p. 45).

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a very strong one as she was definitely in opposition to Sheikh Mahmud of Sulaimani, head of the holy family of Barzinji sheikhs[32], and the representative of the dream of a free and independent Kurdistan. Lady Adila died in 1924 during the British mandate period. Her grave, which I visited at a burial ground near the village of Ababaile, some distance from Halabja, was in 1957 deserted and neglected. My interpreter told me that it was in accordance with Lady Adila's own wish that her grave was neither marked nor maintained, but added that people drove sheep and goats over the grave, and that, altogether, there was but little sympathy for the memory of Lady Adila of Halabja, an attitude that appeared to be shared by my interpreter, who, on another occasion, referred with the deepest veneration to Lady Adila's political opponent Sheikh Mahmud, as the real ruler and *malik* (king) of Kurdistan.

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Whereas Lady Adila thus cooperated with the British mandate authorities at the beginning of the twenties, another prominent woman, Hafsa Khan, cousin of Sheikh Mahmud and married to his brother, Sheikh Kader, arose in the opposition circles of Sulaimani. She was sufficiently wise to accept

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175 562 565 responsibility for a group of British officers which had been taken prisoner by her cousin and brother-in-law, Sheikh Mahmud, during the disturbances in that town in 1919. The wisdom of this was demonstrated shortly afterwards when Sheikh Mahmud was captured near the Bazian Pass and, on account of her behaviour, a sentence of death passed upon him was reduced to imprisonment for life[33], which later was rescinded.

Another prominent Kurdish woman, Fatima Khan, is referred to by Edmonds[34]. After her husband's death she administered his estate which comprised eight villages. Elected by the inhabitants of the villages she negotiated, although a woman, with the government authorities. [622]

562 114 The information available from various male authors can be summed up as follows: The Kurdish woman is said to possess a far freer position than is the case in other Muslim areas. She does not veil, except in towns and urban surroundings. Monogami prevails. "Love marriages" can occur.

Below I shall describe the extent to which this information tallies with my personal experience as a woman amongst Kurdish women in Southern Kurdistan.

Fig. 3. Persian woman crushing wheat in a revolving grinder. Topzawa.

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Fig. 6. Urban milieu. Uneducated married woman and educated girl taking tea in the courtyard. Sulaimani.

The Kurdish women whose cultural pattern is to be considered below cannot, in my view, be grouped under the common denominator of "the Kurdish woman". Even on the basis of such relatively limited investigation material as was available to me, four different female environments can be pointed to, the cultural patterns of which vary very greatly. The first and most obvious division is that between village and provincial environment, but these two groups can be further subdivided, though on different principles.

The village milieu can be socially divided into two strata, the aristocracy and the peasants. To the former belong the sheikh homes in Topzawa, Shadala, Sargalu and Serkan. I visited peasant homes in Topzawa, Rikawa, Mirza Rustam and Balkha. The police official's house I dwelt in at the ferry town of Mirza Rustam was in between the two.

The provincial town environment (for the sake of simplicity called urban milieu) I first met with in the local Liwa capital, Sulaimani, but also in Kirkuk, Halabja, Tawella and Rowanduz. The women of this urban milieu could be sharply divided into two groups, the "educated" who had been given schooling, and the "uneducated" who, like the village women, could neither read nor write. These two groups of urban women could be met with in the same house, as was the case in the home of my interpreter, where the husband's two wives belonged to the "uneducated" group whilst the daughters had attended school and thus represented the other group. But even though these two groups of urban women were found within the same household their cultural patterns were quite different.

The part of Kurdistan I visited (Southern Kurdistan) is mountainous and lies in the northern sub-tropical zone. The year consists of a cool winter half year, with rain from November to April, and a hot, rainless summer from May to October. As an exception I experienced a violent shower on June 5th (1957). The villages lie on the sides of hills above the cultivated fields. The houses, for the most part built together in rows, lie in terraces above each other up the steep slope of the hill, so that the flat roof of the undermost house forms an open space outside the one above it. The communications consist of mountain tracks hedged by scrub and heaped-up stones, or the bottom of dried-out watercourses. No attempt has anywhere been made to level the ground. The watercourses and springs

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Fig. 12. The tobacco field is ploughed with oxen. Topzawa.

Tobacco is not fermented. Pulverized tobacco cannot be rolled for so far as I could discover the
cigarettes, but is poured by hand into cigarette-sized paper tubes ending in a cardboard cylinder. These paper tubes, inserted in each other and collected in large packets, are purchased at the *sūq* in the town. They are placed in vertical groups on metal trays. The filling of the paper casings with pulverized tobacco is woman's work. (Tobacco sample: E. 2245).

Woman's world, like man's, is subject to the social structure of the village.

The villages I had an opportunity of visiting belonged to an *Āgā*[64] or squire[65]. He had no need to live in the village, for he could, for example, have resided in Sulaimani on the Surchina plain[66]. Incidentally the owner of a village could be a woman managing the property for a son who had not reached his majority, as was the case with Lady Adila's daughter-in-law, who at the time I met her was living at Sulaimani. It was said that she owned "many villages and watercourses". If the owner of a village did not dwell on his property he had in the village, according to Leach[67], a manager "kokha", to represent him. A village owner could be of the same family as his tenants or farmers, in which event relations were purely tribal. In cases I was able to investigate in Topzawa, Rakawa, Sargalu and Serkan the sheikhs were not related to the inhabitants and conditions were feudal. The

342 capitals, which were a primitive form of the classical, volute capital. From this side of the loggia two wooden doors each lead to a rectangular room with large, low-sited glass windows looking out on the loggia, and two windows placed high, facing the courtyard of the family house and the property's outer wall, respectively. All windows had iron bars in front of the panes. A door connected the two rooms which had in their thick exterior walls niches of the same size as the windows. To the area of the guest house must also be ascribed a small cubic clay building on the opposite side of the road, built not over the lower-lying field—a latrine, subjacent, with a hole in the floor, intended for the male guests of the house. The family's latrine consisted of the garden basin's waste-pipe near the garden wall, and lay in the area of the farm. In the evening the farm's big gate and the narrow wooden door of the family house were carefully locked and bolted. The two buildings were then completely closed off from the guest wing, whose small windows facing the courtyard were placed so high in the wall that it was impossible through them to discern the slightest glimpse of family life in the two other areas of the property.

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562 The combination family house and farm formed the frame for the women's daily life and domestic activities. They only visited the guest wing occasionally in order to clean it or to receive female guests when the absence of the men provided an opportunity for them to use it for this purpose. A constant traffic went on between the farm and the family house, as the only water supply was the garden basin lying by the north-western corner of the latter, though in the area of the former. This was where all washing took place—food, cooking utensils, clothes and the human body, and, as mentioned, the basin's waste-pipe near the wall was used as the women's latrine. The remarkable thing was that this water basin was also available to a certain number of the village women who have closed rim, winded themselves, relieved nature, and, finally, fetched the daily water supply for themselves and their families. This was carried away in clay pitchers, goat-skin or ram's skin containers. Some of these women took advantage of their errand at the basin to enter the area of the family house, either to pay a visit or to use the small transportable revolving stone quern for the grinding of salt, of rare but flour, or of boiled wheat grain as a substitute for rice. However, just as many came merely to use the water basin. In the same way that the water basin, which constituted an absolutely essential supplement to life in the family house, lay in the area of the farm, so in a store room of the dwelling house were certain objects whose functions suggested that they should be stored in the area of the farm. Things like sickles, ploughs, and the large jar-shaped clay silos, were stored in the dark, windowless store room behind the main living room of the house and only with access from here.

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The dwelling house, situated on a clay terrace, dug out of the terrain, with five high steps leading up to it, was of one storey only and had no cellar. It consisted of six rooms, three looking out on the courtyard and three behind. There were no windows in the back and side walls. The main central room looking towards the court represented the wider-like, three-walled layout. The hard-packed earth floor was here covered by a thin, irregular and inadequate layer of cement. The two side rooms were a step higher than the central room and were entered from it. Both possessed two iron-barred, low-sited, glass windows overlooking the court. The western room had an irregular mud floor, the other a cement floor like that in the central room. In the narrow back wall of this sitting room two steps led up to a small door which opened on a little cupboard-like room, devoid of windows, with

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[TEXT CONTINUES TO P. 34 P. 34 -- ANALYSIS]

apparently more important than the private life of the individual or the married couple that a reception room for male guests should be maintained in such wise that they could come and go without being seen by the women of the house.

WOMAN'S ACTIVITIES IN THE HOME

The activities of Kurdish women comprise the following eleven occupations: Baking of bread, manufacture of milk, making of tea, cooking, fetching water, collecting fuel, treatment of grain, washing and washing and ironing of clothes, cleaning the house, and making beds. They rise at about 5 a.m., relax or sleep during the middle of the day, and go to bed between 11 and midnight.

Baking of bread. Kurdish bread consists of circular pancakes, soft, of the thickness of paper, about 30 cm. in diameter, crisp when new, so soft later that it almost resembles wash leather[1]. The dough, kamir, is prepared from wheat flour, dird, sifted through a coarse sieve, water, dev, and salt, xwê. It is kept in a sack or bag, xêrdîn,[2] of knotted or woven material (S. 2207). Yeast is not used, and when the dough is prepared it is immediately ready for use. It is kneaded in a large, flat, circular copper dish tîmsî on the ground, with an edge about 10 cm. high. The dough is loosened from the dish by the help of a flat iron spoon, (S. 2202) about 25 cm. long, the handle of which ends in a loop. The dough is formed by hand into lumps, gumik, about the size of a clenched fist, which are laid out, often on a plastic cloth, for later use. The forming of the dough is done in two ways, the one chosen depending, so far as I could discover, on whether the baking was to be done in a jar-shaped earth

Fig. 12. Baking. Dough about to placed upon baking pillow. Tergawer.
Fig. 13. Baking. Dough is rolled out upon baking table. Tergawer.

The birth of a girl in Barzinja might cause a husband problem D

neighbours' presence, or various regulations about men with men[1], who would be able to hear him a son. Attempts were made to protect a male child against the evil eye by dressing it in girl's clothes[2], by sewing triangular amulet pockets onto its clothes, and by fixing ornaments to its hair and glass beads and beans around the arms. These ornaments were blue, the colour that averts evil (see amulets).

Circumcision, an ancient Arab custom, is preserved in Islam, though not directly mentioned in the Coran. According to Jeyakar[3] the male child is circumcised on the 7th day, the 40th day, or not until its 7th year of life or on reaching puberty. According to Gorge[4], circumcision is performed on the 6th day of life at the same time as the naming ceremony. In the case of the Kurdish boys, it is said to be practised when they are about 3 days old.

Naming ceremony. In Southern Kurdistan the naming ceremony was said to take place on the child's 7th day of life. According to my interpreter, a mulla, sitting in a tailor's position, took the child on his lap and whispered 7 times into its ear: "I call thee (name), son (daughter) of Hawa (Eve)". Examples of names for boys are: *'Arif, Hamid, Ja'far, Karim, Kemal, Mahmud, Majid, Muhammad, Qâsim, Sa'id, Sardâr, Wahid, Wahîd*, and for girls: *Aja, 'Aliya, Galla, Mullâa, Nahid, Nahida, Sarâba.*

In accordance with Oriental custom the Kurds have no surnames[5]. In the case of men the addition of the title Sayyid or Shaikh existed. My host at the village of Tegawra was referred to by everybody, also by his wife, as "Shaikh" Taffik. In my experience the term shaikh was used in front of a man's name to describe a man of the village aristocracy belonging to the family that owned the village in question. For example there were Shaikh Taffik and his brother, usually called "Mîrzâh-Gâlal", but whose real name was *Abdal Qâdir Shaikh 'Arif*, who owned the villages of Tegawra and Kalawa in common. There was also a third brother, *Kâkâ Abd* (Elder brother R.) or *Shaikh Abd*, who owned the village of Sargalu. The eldest son of Shaikh Taffik was likewise addressed as *Shaikh Sarâb*. Thus the word *shaikh* is not a designation for a descendant of the prophet, as maintained by Barth[6] and Lorch, both of whom confuse the term "Shaikh" with that of "Sayyid". In Kurdistan, I found that "Shaikh" stood for a member of a tribal ruling family[7] and also that, as maintained by Lorch: "the name is however carried as an ordinary name"[8]. As regards the people I lived amongst the term carried with it no religious power or reputation of holiness[9].

Address like *Khan*, used in Arabia and Iran[10] "father to, slave of, son of ..... and so forth, are not used by the Kurds.

Women are addressed and referred to as "madame", (in my case Madame Hanna, not Madame Hannah). In addition - a peculiarity of the Kurds - the male title "Khan" could be added to the name of a distinguished woman[11]. My interpreter referred to and addressed her 3 year old sister as Bella Khan, called Shaikh Taffik's wife Pia Ina Khan, and was herself referred to as Mullâa Khan.

The Kindergarten child. Analysis of the position of the child. As opposed to Christianity, Islam allows no place for the infant and small child, as it first recognises the child as a member of the community

4: Human E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

accompanying us on our trips, without there being the slightest suspicion of difficulty with him. We literally scarcely realized his existence so well did he fit into the various situations. In the over-populated house at Sulaimani, however, I once saw my interpreter's mother, the elder of the two wives, run through the room with a glowing twig from the fire to hit him with it for some reason or other. My impression was that the woman unjustifiably had demanded some service or other from the lad, which he had refused, and that it was she who was in the wrong.

In another urban milieu, an absolutely unobserved one insofar as the women was concerned, I once came across what we should term a difficult and malicious girl of 6-7 years of age. She was the elder of two girls, two others having died, and the mother was clearly unbalanced because the husband, pressed by neighbours and possibly also by personal predilection, had several times been about to obtain another wife who would bear him the son refused to the present wife. The child was a visible manifestation of the mother's conflict situation, and one, in my opinion, only to be considered an exception among the Kurdish children I had an opportunity of observing.

By reviewing the activities of the children in and outside the home in the four different female environments I learned to know in Southern Kurdistan, an attempt will be made to give an impression of their misfortunes and upbringing.

Small girls of the village aristocracy took part in women's home work according to their age and ability. They assisted in rolling out the dough for baking from the age of three. They kept the sheep still when being milked in the courtyard, and kept the flies away when their elders were at meals. They helped to pick the vegetables in the field. They assisted adult men and women in the washing of hands, which took place in a squatting position whilst water from a jug was poured over the hands. They filled the samovar with charcoal and took part in washing-up. Last, but not least, they participated in the serving of tea, as it was the children, or, if none was present, the handiest in the company, who fetched the tea glasses from the samovar and returned with them when they were empty (cf. p. 48). This was done with seriousness and decorum, and with no little pride at having reached the stage where that was entrusted to them. They attended to the small brothers and sisters, helped them to eat, and lead small ones on their backs when they left the house. School attendance was not part of their life pattern. A male, however, told me that he had attended attending the village boy's school where he taught (Bekhir), but that was an exception[1].

Small girls of the village aristocracy were, when grown up, fully trained in the skills expected of them. They were well-acquainted with home work, the care of children, and with decorous behaviour.

In Sheikh Taiba's house at Topzawa most of the home work was done by a 15 year old daughter, who also stood in attendance if, for example, her mother wanted to take a bath in the hammam. It was said that until one of the sons—the eldest of whom was only 15—came home with a daughter-in-law, the mother did not wish to give away in marriage the indispensible working power represented by her daughter.

The boys within the village aristocracy were sent to school. As they reached a suitable age, the sons of the sheikh at Topzawa were sent to relatives' homes at Kirkuk or Sulaimani in order to attend school[2]. During these years they visited out of the village seldom, only returning to it during their

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

summer holidays. During their stay at home in the village they led the life of adult men, that is to say they spent most of the day outside the home in company with those of their own age. They used at night the iron beds, and they slept late in the mornings. The only obligation resting on the sons of the house was the waiting upon any male guests who might be in the guest house, to whom they had to bring tea and food prepared by the women within the area of the family residence.

The elder of these two sons, aged 18, worked as a mechanic with the European engineers at the Dokan Dam Site, which resulted in an irreparable breach in his pattern of behaviour, the structure of which lost its inner coherence. As the leading young man of the village, he left the sheikh's farm every morning on horseback. The other hands from Topzawa and Rikawa covered on foot the distance between their villages and the Site (nearly an hour's walk, only trying in great summer heat). At the Dokan Dam Site he then was submerged among the other unskilled Kurdish labourers, a dirty little mechanic in overalls, resuming his inherited glory and distinction only when he rode back up the side of the mountain to his father's home. Here his 12 year old half-sister took charge of the horse, unsaddled it, put it out to grass, and then brought water to her half-brother for a thorough wash, if this was performed on the clay terrace outside the central room and not at the garden basin.

Despite the young man's admiration of the French group among the European engineers with whom he had most to do, and a flirtation at a distance with one of the English girls, he gradually abandoned the selling of his hours, for he only received money which was of no interest whatever in the aristocratic village milieu, but he never succeeded in being accepted by the foreigners, a thing he had desperately hoped for. He was a typical example of the results of an old pattern of life, with its firmly fixed scale of values, being dissolved under European influence without anything of equal value being substituted in its stead.

The girls in a humble village environment, like those in the aristocratic, took part in domestic activities which also comprised the fetching of water, often from far away, and milking out in the mountains. Small girls were always seen with smaller children on their backs, whom they helped with anything there was to do, and washed in the nearest watercourse if any accident occurred. Girls in the villages knew nothing of schools, but they grew up fully trained in their future duties as wives and mothers.

For that matter schooling did not enter into the life pattern of boys either among ordinary peasants in the villages. On the other hand the chief labour was much utilized in agriculture. They watched the sheep and goats. They fetched grass from the mountains as fodder, equipped with sacks and sickles. They helped in the field work and took the plough, which could be dismantled, from one field to another, up and down the hill side. By this participation in adult agricultural work they, like the girls, obtained a training which stood them in good stead later in life.

In the third and fourth environments, the educated and tendencied urban milieus, school-going was customary for both boys and girls.

An elementary school scheme exists in Southern Kurdistan consisting of a 6 year primary and 3 year secondary school. The latter is divided into a 3 year intermediate and a 2 year preparatory school with possibilities of transferring to a 4 year higher college. The school age is 7, and since 1940 6 years primary schooling is obligatory where possible.

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

In some villages there was a primary school, for example in Balkha, Serkan and Sargalu, but not by any means in all. In Topzawa and Rakawa there were no schools. Sometimes there could be a Coran school in connexion with a mosque or, for example, at Sargalu, which children attended until their proper schooling began. As regards school conditions, reference should be made to Longrigg and Stoakes[9]. I shall here deal with the reflection of the school in the homes where I stayed, the effect of some members of the family having learned, or being about to learn, to read and write.

As pointed out by Longrigg and Stoakes, the acquisition of book learning is marked by the fact that the passage of both primary and secondary schools becomes "the watershed"[10] in a community like the Kurdish. How decisive a watershed, can be seen if we observe the difference between working conditions in the schools arranged on the Western pattern, and in the Kurdish homes.

The school and exercise books brought home by the Topzawa sheikh's 13 year old son during the holidays appeared to be completely unadaptable foreign elements in the atmosphere of the house. In the first place there was no possibility of placing or keeping the books anywhere except in the wall niches, repositories for many household articles and quite unsuited to books. Nor was there any work table in this dwelling pattern, where all work was done on the floor. In addition it was impossible to read and study in quiet surroundings, for the homes offered neither space nor possibility for private life.

In my interpreter's home at Sulaimani, I faced examples of the various training possibilities open to young women in Southern Kurdistan in 1957. My interpreter had been trained as a folk-school teacher at the Teachers' Training College at Baghdad[11]. During her studies she had lived there as a boarder. The training here lasted two years if the girl was to teach at one of the five 4 years primary schools which were beginning to be opened in villages, and three years if she were to teach in a corresponding school in the towns. My interpreter had taken the 3 year course, and was at the time I lived in her home, a teacher at the Guizha School for Girls opened in Sulaimani in 1956. At her home I was able to see how incompatible to the family's daily pattern of behaviour was the school work of her 16 year old sister, who after the summer holidays would have to pass an exam in mathematics to complete her 3 years intermediate school. Her school and exercise books, her protractor and ruler, lay in the wall niches all mixed up with cups, glasses, medicines; she herself sat on the floor in a corner and tried in vain to concentrate on the circles and triangles she was describing or the calculations she was engaged in. Finally she left the house. With books and drawing instruments under her black *abā* she wandered off to stay with her newly-married sister whose husband had left shortly after marriage to work in one of the villages. The whole life pattern, with two uneducated women in the home, where all contact between women took place in the home, conditions for working school children were decidedly poor. Where, as in Sulaimani's urban milieu, girls at school are absent from the home for many hours a day, their home training as wives and mothers is interrupted. If the half-grown up daughters were engaged in schooling and the adult ones were teachers, as was the case at my interpreter's home in Sulaimani, all cooking, washing and washing-up for a family of 14 persons devolved, except for the holidays, on the two uneducated wives at home. In addition there was the cleaning of grain and the baking of bread which in our culture is delegated to factories.

If, therefore, the working effort of the daughters is removed from the home, an immense labour is

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absent of the daughters is removed from the home, an inhuman labour is involved for the wives remaining behind. The distribution of work between the various generations of women in the home, where the younger waited on the elder, is thus destroyed and replaced by its converse. Also dissolved is the stable family hierarchy still to be found in the villages, where the children from quite a young age take their due places, their duties increasing with age, a system based on the serving of the elder by the younger, the boys by the girls.

Bishop[77] says that it is regrettable that Iranian children have no childhood. Longrigg and Stookes[78] remark that childhood in Iran is no definite age, but rather a matter of whether or not one is regarded as adult. Accordingly, the time until the child became a small adult with responsibility was made as short as possible.

In my opinion our culture and form of schooling places a far heavier burden on our children than is the case among the Kurds. We isolate children from adults, both in regard to work and leisure, in order that later they shall be able to honour the big demands made upon them by an industrialized society. As a result the home becomes a type of service station, where everything is arranged for the child to be able to attend to its schooling as well as possible in order to be equipped for the severe competition facing it later on. The home does not become a place where the child becomes a member of a small community, possessing its definite position and duties, which gives a far earlier and greater maturity than that provided by any amount of school attendance.

Among the Kurds it also appeared as though schooling was doing away with piety, and the younger generation in Sulaimani seemed to regard religion and what goes with it from an historical angle. None of the school-taught young men or women took part in daily prayers. Islam's heavy religious demands on daily life would seem to be incompatible with attendance at school. But what can be

The position of the child in and outside the home.

Activities	I Village Community		II Peasants		III Educated urban		IV Uneducated urban	
	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys
Work at home	x		x		x		x	
Work outside home			x	x				x
Schooling		x			x	x	x	x
Street life		x		x		x		x

A common to girls in all four female environments is assistance in the home according to age, whereby the girl acquires the necessary training in domestic activities. For the bigger girls also the charge of their smaller brothers and sisters, thus obtaining the required knowledge of child care.

In the case of girls of the humble village milieu, also help to the adult women in work outside the home, milking, fetching of water etc. For girls in an urban milieu, both educated and uneducated, also school attendance.

The common feature of the boys training in the "street education", life with men outside the home. In a village milieu they take part in the men's agricultural activities, particularly the guarding of sheep and goats and the collection of fodder. In an urban/semi-urban village milieu the boys are sent away to school in towns like Sulaimani and Kirkuk. In the two urban environments the boys attend local schools. Among the peasants the boy only attends school should there be a preparatory school in the village, and to the extent that his work in the fields can be dispensed with.

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family select the prospective bride, also when the first choice is dropped, as mentioned above. It is the women who conduct the preliminary negotiations[92], which are concluded by a meeting between the men of the two families implicated.

The girl can refuse to agree to the union, but this, I was told, is regarded as a great insult. According to the law the father and grandfather have as *wali* the right to marry off a minor daughter or granddaughter without obtaining her permission[93].

In the meantime a Kurdish girl can oppose the concept of marriage itself. My interpreter, an extremely intelligent girl, hoped to be able to continue her education abroad, a thing the city authorities persisted in holding out as a possibility, and therefore did not wish to marry for the time being. I did not come across any example of a father or mother forcing a daughter into marriage. There was, on the other hand, a case where a father had forced a young son to marry a girl fifteen years older. To avoid this forced marriage the young man fled to the mountains, but in vain. The father got his way. Whilst in Kurdistan I met the woman in question and the fruits of the marriage, a little girl; the husband I only saw at a distance.

In regard to the age at which marriage is contracted, there is the case of my interpreter's half-sister, who became a bride at the age of twelve. Asked if she could consider being married, she remained silent[94]. I was told that she had been big and strong for her age. Her two children had been born when she was 16 and 18, and she and they looked quite healthy and sound. In Halabja I lived in a home where the then 25 year old wife had been married at the age of 11, her husband then having been 25[95]. Her first child was born 6–7 years after the marriage. It was said that in the districts around Tawella, to which many families moved *just* for most of the summer on account of the work in the mulberry plantations there, and adolescent boys and girls picked fruit together, that, failing the protection afforded to their virginity by a home, it was common for girls to be married before reaching puberty. In Balkha brides of 11–12 were mentioned. Here the reason for the early entry into the married state was said to be the shortage of adult women, but it was also averred that the first child was not born for 6–7 years after the wedding. Maternity before the girl is full-grown, as met with in India, does not therefore, appear to be usual in Southern Kurdistan.

It might be expected that a girl of 11 or 12 would as a housewife be little use to a man, but my interpreter told me that a girl of this age—to us but a child—although completely uneducated and illiterate, was on the other hand domestically accomplished and fully aware of the behaviour expected of her in her new home. In consequence no major difficulties existed. As a parallel to this we have what Kaberry[96] says about the conditions of the Australian aborigines. Here a child bride of 9–11 is fully trained in the pattern of behaviour expected of her, has some sexual knowledge, is prepared for her wifely duties, and therefore cannot in any way be compared with a European schoolgirl of a similar age.

The marriage contract. A church or civil wedding is the main feature of a marriage contracted in the West, and conditions in the event of divorce, death of the spouse, and the wife's economic position during marriage are not laid down at that time. The drawing up of a marriage settlement and separate estate are still not regarded as really good form, and, despite the large percentage, divorce is not taken into consideration. Questions of inheritance are also arranged later, if at all.

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Fig. 92. Wedding dance. Men dance in a row to the music of a drum and a clarinet. Rakawa.

harmonization, so, as Østrup[139] points out, this music to us sounds flat and false. Other instruments include a 20–30 cm. long shepherd's pipe, both single and double (E. 2280–81), referred to by Hay[140], one of which I acquired though I did not hear it played.

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To sum up: At a village wedding among peasants the men's rôle comprises fetching the bride at daybreak, about 6 a.m. accompanying her to the bridegroom's home and participation in the festive meal there. (At the one wedding in Rakawa it was said that 300 men were fed simultaneously.) Then a chain dance which, ending at about 4 p.m. is a sign that the festival is over, whereafter the men go home. In addition to the bride price paid by the bridegroom, his parents must, in the villages, pay for the cars used to fetch the bride and for the wedding meal and dance.

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The women's part runs parallel to the men's without the two groups having any contact with each other. The women invited to the party assembled in the bridegroom's home some hours before the men's cortège, including the bride's car, could be expected to come into sight on the narrow mountain track leading to the village. At the wedding I witnessed, the women were given the three-walled central room on the first floor that opened out on to the clay roof covering the entrance hall to the house,

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Of the two women who had accompanied the bride, the aunt was to stay in the new home with her for a week; the other woman was to keep guard outside the bridal chamber and return to Sulaimani, whence the bride was come, the following morning taking with her the bridal sheet with the proof of the bride's virginity[146]. It was said that if the bride proved not to be a virgin, she would be killed by one of her own male relatives.

A festive meal similar to that served to the men was partaken of by the women. This was carried in on large, common eating trays. The women ate first and then the children. When the meal was over the women guests departed.

The women's rôle in the village milieu thus comprises the reception and welcome of the bride, and the witnessing of certain ceremonies when the bridegroom first meets his bride. These ceremonies include the release of a fowl over the bride and a blow on the head delivered by the groom. The women's rôle then includes a common meal that ends the festivities. The bride's mother-in-law bids her welcome, though the bride's mother does not accompany her daughter when she leaves the home and has no part in the reception of the bride and her handing over to the bridegroom. In her place is a female relative and the woman who is to bring back evidence of the bride's virginity.

In regard to the fowl released over the bride's head, it was said that earlier the bird was killed, but now they just let is loose. In this connection it may be of interest that Granqvist reports about the Arabs in Palestine that at some places an animal is sacrificed[147] when the bridal couple enters the bridegroom's house.

Granqvist also mentions that according to Arab custom, entry into a house is always an important matter, as all kinds of spirits, demons, *jinns* and so forth attempt to slip in, too, and naturally a bride's first entry into her new home is a specially delicate affair[148]. In regard to Islamised Turks in Chinese and Russian Turkestan, Krohn calls attention to the remains of Shamanism and ancestral worship, and refers to the precautionary measures connected with the entrance of the bride into the husband's family. Quoting Grenard, Krohn writes: "Es handelt sich sich danach nur um Massnahmen, die Frau aus ihrem Sippenkultverband auszulösen und in einen neuen, den der Sippe des Mannes, aufzunehmen"[149]. In my opinion this ceremony falls under "Rites de passage"[150]; the blow I witnessed is given with enormous gravity and thoroughness by the bridegroom to the still unknown young woman, whilst his male relatives afford him symbolical support by ranging themselves alongside him and in helping him to smoothe the heavy stick.

The bride knew what was awaiting her when, supported by her two companions she approached the entrance door to the house. Everybody appeared to be taking part in an act of the utmost seriousness, an act that to the regret of bride and bridegroom might result in a fractured skull but which they had no possibility of avoiding, an act not performed before the male group but the assembled women's group. Krohn's analysis can probably be accepted: that it is here a matter of a ceremony, the purpose of which is to release the bride from her own family and to accept her in the man's, as she crosses the threshold of her future home and before the first sexual intercourse takes place. Granqvist refers to the fact that in Palestine the bridegroom gives his bride three blows on the hand which she places on the door before entering her future home. In notes, Granqvist quotes a number of statements by other writers in support of the contention that the blows are a symbolic act that are to assure

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831 684 the bride was punished for not having guarded the honour of the family—not by her injured husband, but by men of her own family—she would be taken to be examined by the woman gynaecologist to discover whether the lacking proofs of virginity were due to some physical irregularity. It was stated that the metre of white cotton material that comprised the actual, detachable, bridal sheet would be kept by the bride's family for a year as proof for the bride's in-laws if any doubt should be raised about the bride's honour. "About a year" means to about the birth of the first child. After that the bride sheet would be washed and included in the household linen.

585 831 In view of the very definite modesty prevalent among Kurds, and the aversion to any display of nakedness, the lack of modesty when it is a matter of first mating is quite unusually surprising. It is a public affair and must therefore be extremely embarrassing for the young woman; equally painful must it be for the young man who is expected immediately to consummate the marriage and then, his garments adjusted, to leave the field to the waiting woman, who roughly dries the bride's genital opening in order to obtain as clear a trace on the sheet as possible. I heard of no case where a named bride had been killed on her wedding morning.

183 562 684 831 Hay[154] states that with the Kurds the law is very strict as regards the honour of women, but it seems to be the honour of married women that is concerned when he says that "a woman ... who misconducts herself, or, who is suspected on reasonable grounds of misconducting herself, must surely die; and the husband, brother or whoever is responsible for her, who fails to put her out of the way, is considered to have lost his honour, and a Kurd's *namûs* or honour is one of his most precious possessions". From what I was told it is only the young, unmarried girls whose honour is guarded by such drastic measures.

In regard to the bridal sheet custom, Nikitine[155] says that is was falling into desuetude as early as 1922, remarking that it is "à son déclin, une coutume consistant à mettre *sur* le lit des nouveaux mariés un linge blanc ("pyalle"), qu'on renvoie ensuite aux parents de la jeune femme, comme preuve de sa virginité".

585 831 191 The use of the bridal sheet with the Iranian Lurs is mentioned by Fellberg[156]. That the Arabs kill a young woman who does not pass the test, and that this is done by her own male relatives, is referred to by Dickson[157], though he adds that he has heard of one case where "... the man being chivalrous enough to smuggle into the bridal chamber a fresh piece of meat with blood on it, with which to soil the bed linen ...". To this can be put Niebuhr's information about the Arabs as long ago as 1763: that it is seldom that the unfortunate bride suffers, "denn sie wissen Künste"[158].

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595 *Polygamy and divorce.* According to the Koran, provided a man's economic position allows it he may have up to four wives at a time[159], but is obliged to treat them alike and spend an equal amount of time, day and night, with each of them[160].

586 587 The husband has sole right to an immediate dissolution of the marriage by pronouncing *talâq*: "I renounce thee" or, better: "I abandon all right over thee". Until the expiration of the *'idda*-period[161] the wife cannot contract a new marriage, and during this term she is entitled to maintenance[162]. By *talâq* a man can twice divorce himself from his wife but, should he regret his act, can without further

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

ceremony make her his wife again within the above-mentioned period[163]. Should he have pronounced *talāq* three times or have stated it thrice on the first occasion, the wife must contract a pro forma marriage with another man and must be renounced by this "straw husband" before the husband can take her back[164]. The Coran forbids the promise of abstinence, or if you will, a semi-divorce within marriage, that is to say, that the husband declares: "Let thy back be to me as my mother's", known as *ẓihār* (*ẓahr* = back)[165]. In this case the wife will not obtain the right to return to her family home with everything she brought into the marriage, plus what she may herself have earned and that part of the bride price (usually one third) that has been put aside for such a contingency, and with a view to facilitating a new marriage.

On her side the wife has the following possibilities of securing the dissolution of the marriage: The marriage contract can contain a clause to the effect that neglect on the part of the husband gives the wife the right to regard the marriage as dissolved, by repaying the bride price, if she can prove before a judge that the man does not fulfil his obligations in regard to maintaining her in accordance with her station; in cases of certain illnesses or if it should transpire that he is of poorer birth than stated.

On contracting marriage the husband undertakes to provide for the wife; she in return engages to present him with children, which means that the children born belong to the man's home. If the marriage is dissolved whilst the children are small, the wife takes with her male children under two years of age[166], girls under nine (or up to puberty), whereafter they return to the husband's home. On marriage, therefore, the woman runs the risk of being renounced (attempts being made to reduce this by the fixing of a high bride price, and particularly by making as high as possible that part of it set aside for possible later payment); she also runs the risk of sharing the man with another wife or more. The husband runs a risk that the wife the women of his family have selected for him, whom in most cases he has never seen, is impossible to live with. To meet this contingency he has the immediate right to divorce her and also the right to take other wives.

Having briefly recounted the ordinary rules of Islam within the *shāfi'i* rite to which the Kurds belong, I shall now attempt to recount what I experienced during my relatively short stay in Southern Kurdistan in order to throw light on matters concerning divorce and polygamy. I take these two phenomena together for, as will appear below, they are interwoven, and the one is often the reason for the other.

At the time I was able to study the conditions, there was in each of the three or four homes of the village aristocracy that constitute my material for comparison, only one wife. This happened to be so in the case of the sheikh families in Topzawa, Bargalu, Shadala and Serkan. Soane[167] states that the Kurds from north to south are monogamous, an assertion repeated by his wife[168]. This does not quite accord with my experience. In Topzawa the current wife had five children aged 18, 17, 13, 8 and 6. In the home there was also a step-daughter of 12. As illegitimate children are unknown in the Kurdish pattern of life, the sheikh, within a period lying between 1938 and 1945, has had two wives for a shorter or longer period, and the one who only presented him with one child was sent home to her parents.

The sister of the present one, about 35 years of age, was married to an old sheikh in Shadala. There appears here to have been a succession of marriages. Several groups of married sons with wives and

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

CHAPTER V

WOMAN'S PLACE IN THE RELIGIOUS LIFE OF ISLAM

As we know, the five pillars of Islam are: The confession of faith, the five daily eulogies of Allah, generally known as the five daily "prayers", the duty to give alms, the fast in the 9th month, and the pilgrimage to Mecca undertaken in the 12th month of the Muslim lunar year[1].

Whereas the confession of faith is not dealt with in the law books of Islam, the other four pillars, coupled with the necessary ritual purity when reciting the daily prayers, form the five religious acts or pious exercises that comprise the actual cult of Islam.

What place has this cult in the life of the Kurdish woman?

With the nymphs of Paradise, houris, awaiting the faithful in Paradise—an idea that only appears at the beginning of Muhammed's revelations[2] and is later dropped[3]—the Islamic woman, in our Western conception, is to some extent excluded from the religious life of Islam. The same impression is gained by a visit to a mosque. Whereas in our Western culture, most of the congregation that assembles in church on Sunday—the only day devoted by us to religion—are women, few women are seen in Islam's ever-open, carpeted, silent house of prayer, the mosque. When women go there it is only within a definite area barred by a low railing at the far end of the building.

If without access to a Muslim home, one therefore gains the impression that in Islam a life of piety is a matter for the men, yet it is only at the Friday midday prayer that men congregate in the mosque to any great extent. The men who visit the mosque daily and at several of the five daily prayer times, are those who in their homes or at their places of work have insufficient room and quiet to pray and to perform the prior, ordained ritual washing. Most other men say their prayers in their homes, their booths, or at their place of business[3]. Kurdish women were found to possess a warm and living interest in their religion, but their piety is exercised within the home.

Among the women of the village aristocracy in Topzawa, the five daily prayer periods were observed with the utmost devotion.

The midday prayer that begins the day was observed individually—not like the others, in concert—by the two adult women in the house and the 17 year old daughter shortly after noon and for up to one hour later. The prayer rug, *hâwsal*, (E. 2254) of goat's wool, rectangular in form, 1.60 × 1.16 m. in size, woven in grey and brown natural-coloured yarn, wedge patterned, was placed on the floor in the three-walled room, the axis of which was orientated towards Mekka. The women tied the a

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

pious exercises, which in the evenings alternated with those of the men within the periods of the sunset and evening prayers.

The youngest girl I saw engaged in prayer was 17 years old; the 8–12 years old I did not see pray.

The humble village woman said her prayers at the places where she fetched water, where there was an opportunity to perform the small ablution. This consisted of washing the face, water being conveyed to the face in the hollow of the hands and then wiped off again by a descending motion of the palms to avoid splashing the clothes; the hands and forearms are then washed, the wet right hand being passed over the hair as a symbolical washing of the whole head. The ablution is concluded by washing the feet. At the same time the woman has as a rule first used the water basin, or the outflow of the spring from the watering place, as a latrine with subsequent washing of the private parts, so that, both physically and ritually clean, she can step onto the large flat stone, usually to be found at watering places, intended as a substitute for the prayer rug and of about the same size.

The women in the educated urban milieu of Sulaimani did not pray. I only came across one exception to this: my interpreter's younger sister, who was to marry into a family where the women belonged to the uneducated milieu, though the coming husband, like herself, was a trained school teacher, prayed industriously—at all events in the time preceding her wedding.

Among the uneducated women of Sulaimani one met piety and punctual religious observance, at all events in regard to the afternoon, sunset and evening prayers. At an evening party the prayer rug could be lent to guests, opportunity provided for ablution, and then respect accorded to the devotions of those involved. I noticed also that the women of the village aristocracy at Topzawa were afforded the same facilities during their visit to an Iraqi engineer living in one of the houses at the Dokan Dam Site. Here guests performed the ritual ablutions in a European bath room supplied with hot and cold water. However, this was not as convenient as the garden basin at home in the village. The prayer carpet was then spread out on the parquet floor of the bedroom, which on that day acted as dining, living and midday rest room for the women of the company, the living and dining rooms of the house being used as guest house by the men. The duty to give alms, I saw practised in the aristocratic village home at Topzawa. Two beggars, the younger of whom, being blind, was led by his hand being placed on the shoulder of the other, both had sugar and flour poured into their begging bags, which they carried either in the waistband or over the shoulder. Two invalid women were given articles from the family's ample wardrobe before continuing on crutches their wanderings from village to village. The women in the sheikh's house, mother and grown-up daughter, were apparently not subjected to any restriction in regard to the fulfilment of this duty, which constitutes the Islam's third pillar, even though the men of the house, the sheikh and his younger brother, who also lived in the house, were away.

The result of this obligatory giving of alms in Sulaimani is that permanently-stationed beggars are able to exist on the charity of the men in the street. With a child lying in her lap a veiled woman sat on the ground like a black cone at the entrance to the mosque in the hope of benefiting from the sense of duty of passers-by. In the courtyard of the mosque itself, a fuddleminded girl was deposited every day by her parents in what looked like a European perambulator, with a bowl between her deformed hands. It was said that although there was a public institution for both the classes of beggars mentioned, they were able to manage better on the alms obligation ordained by the Coran than they would if they

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

in common with them. This great feeling of religious affinity dissipates any sense of loneliness and desolation. Five times a day it is the duty of a woman to wash herself and arrange her dress, and to concentrate on something other than her monotonous labours, a right and a duty to withdraw into herself, and to demand this respected by all in the vicinity. It bolsters up a person's self-esteem to know that five times a day one can demand a square metre's space and 3-4 minutes, during which no disturbance is allowed, not even from the naughtiest child; that in this space a person's spiritual side is isolated from its surroundings, yet at one with millions of others praising God, a unity that transcends race and frontiers.

The duty to give alms is the pillar of Islam most closely paralleled in our own society until social welfare took over most forms of private charity.

The fast, like the five daily prayers, is a method of being included in a great spiritual and religious fellowship. By subjecting oneself in the month of *ramadân* to the same physical deprivations and suffering as the other adherents to Islam a feeling of solidarity, of affinity, is engendered.

For those fortunate to be able to make it, the pilgrimage is a form of foreign travel that has no counterpart elsewhere. Once more it means entering a great religious association, enduring with others the rigours of the journey and with them assuming a state of sanctity or initiation. The stay in Mecca constitutes a series of ecstatic experiences which women and men who have taken part in them never cease to talk about. These experiences set their mark on the soul and are later outwardly manifested by the clothing rules referred to. In the five daily prayer periods, in the thirty days of the fast, and on the days of pilgrimage, women enter the great congregation of the orthodox on an equal footing with men. These events are such a break in the daily life that they must be considered a spiritual luxury, quite incompatible with the wretched life pattern of our industrialised community. The demands made by Islam on the time of the individual cannot be reconciled with our Western rhythm of life. In return, these demands give to daily life a spiritual content extremely difficult of replacement by anything else whatever. When even a hard-working housewife like the young woman I saw in Bahlia, whose daily work covered husband, child, house, mulberry plantation and the milking of goats twice daily in the mountains, felt that she had the right to take the time to say her daily prayers before preparing dough for bread making or before loading the heavy goatskin of water on her back, it must give her a feeling of human worth in the middle of her inhuman labours. She possessed the right and the duty to collect herself five times daily, to be silent and to consider spiritual matters, and nothing in the world could deprive her of this. It is not surprising that the Islamic Kurdish women conducted themselves with calm and dignity. So long as certain inviolable areas of time and thought exist for them, the daily drudgery will never be able to engulf them entirely.

Underwear. During menstruation the women in the educated and uneducated milieus in Sulaimani (from whom I derived information) used home-made rectangular sanitary towels made out of several layers of cotton material with tapes at the four corners. The tapes were tied together two by two so that the towel was suspended from the woman's hips. The waist was not used as a support in any

4: Hansen B-5 (1957) . 1961 MAIL Hard MAIL

CONCLUSION

WOMAN'S POSITION IN THE COMMUNITY

As mentioned (p. 68) numbers of male travellers[1] have made statements about the position of Kurdish women in society. With the exception of Fraser[2], who distinguishes between the urban upper class and the village dwellers, Kurdish women are referred to under one heading. However, even from the limited material available to me, it is evident that there are still events four different environments, each with its own pattern (and this division ignores the nomads). Some emphasize that Kurdish women are "...as free as in any European country"[3], and Rasbost declares that "... la femme est considérée chez les Kurdes comme l'égale de l'homme"[4]. Even though in the case of the Kurds we must consider ourselves faced by a variant of the Islamic cultural pattern less orthodox than in other Muslim areas, I would point out the risk of using the terms "the position" and "equality" as understood in the West when attempting an assessment of the position of Islamic, and in this case Kurdish, women. Freedom and equality are concepts that must be viewed on the background of the position of Western women when their struggle for changed conditions was in progress at the end of the previous century. These terms bear no relation to the status of Kurdish women at present.

In an attempt to explain the Kurdish women's position in the community I shall now deal with the various forms of veil and the use made of them, contact with the world around, women's possibility of movement, and the degree of seclusion. I shall discuss also the distribution of authority between man and woman in the home, and, finally, the degree of common life in the home. These elements will be investigated within the four female environments existing within the area visited in Southern Kurdistan.

ANALYSIS OF VEIL TYPES

The veil. Five different types of veils, each with its function but differently distributed in the four female environments, were found to be in use. These were as follows: The triangular neck-shoulder veil, *dawnê*, the head veil, *sharê*, the yellow ochre "bridal" veil, the white European bridal veil, and the black face veil, *pêçê*.

The first type, really a shoulder cloth fastened by means of a loop to a cap sewn onto the crown of the cap, is included among the veils because its material, cross bells, interwoven with metal thread, of a green, rose or light-blue colour entitles it to be called a veil, and because its function was to hide the neck and pigtails of the married woman. It was an indispensible constituent of a married Kurdish woman's dress were in its complete form. *The neck-shoulder veil* presupposed the presence of a cap, but not necessarily the use of a turban. At Halabja, for example, it was worn with a scale-covered cap

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

293 562 [184] without a turban. At night it was removed with the cap. The neck-shoulder veil was worn by all married women in the three of the four female environments. On the other hand it had lost its position in the dress of the educated urban woman, whether she was wearing a European dress or the most modern town-style Kurdish costume.

The head veil of light material, gauze or voile was, in the case of a married woman, laid over the cap and turban as an extra. During prayer it was tied around the neck and head. Tied round at night in the same way, it replaced all other head covering. For an unmarried girl it was her sole headgear day and night. A 12 year old girl, the step-daughter in the sheikh's house at Topzawa, put on the veil as an experiment, which suggested that her age would shortly make it necessary for her to begin to wear it. This is the head cloth or veil to which Lane refers in regard to the Arabs in Egypt[1]. Within the village aristocracy it was mainly white. The humble village woman in Topzawa and Rakawa favoured white or turquoise whilst old women wore black, joining the two upper corners together by a knot at the neck, having crossed them under the chin, so that the veil lay around the head like a hood. Certain villages were characterized by head veils of uniform colour: in the new flooded ferry hamlet of Mirza Rostam all were black and in Sargala bright red. [554]

293 576 562 In the two urban milieus the women of the house never went up the ladder to the roof at sundown to arrange the bedding without the head veil, or a piece of material that resembled it, over the head; this applied to both adults and adolescents and even if the young and educated were wearing European summer dresses. Although my interpreter belonged to the educated urban milieu, she could not enter the guest room in her own home to greet Kurdish visitors who had come to talk to me, or bring a guest tea, without this head veil around head and neck. In the family circle and women's apartments women covered themselves with the head veil if a man entered. An educated teacher grabbed a chance head veil, covering herself with it at great speed when a man, newly-married into the family, came into the room. Although he was married to a half-sister of the young woman's brother's wife he must not see her head uncovered. Even in the village of Serkan my interpreter picked up the first veil she saw and threw it over her head when the master of the house, the old sheikh, came in to bid us welcome. Visiting her home a week after the wedding, a young educated woman wore a head veil in her father's presence (see p. 133). When her brother-in-law paid a first visit to her own home she also retained the head veil, although on that occasion she was wearing a short-skirted, armless European summer frock. The uneducated town women wore the head veil day and night.

369 The head veil was thus a general feature in the two female village environments and in the uneducated urban milieu. The veil was used sporadically in the educated urban milieu when a man's presence made this necessary, whether or not the woman was wearing Kurdish costume. European dress, it is true, revealed her legs to the knees and her arms to the shoulders, but she head still had to be covered.

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293 562 *The yellow-ochre "bridal" veil* I saw worn on two occasions, both in a humble village milieu, when witnessing the arrival of the bride at the bridal home, in the one case walking the last stretch (Topzawa) and in the other riding on a white mare (Rakawa). The veil was so placed, over the married woman's

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

turban, that it covered head, neck, and face, though the features could be discerned through it. On this occasion it replaced the white or coloured head veil. Nikitine refers to the use of this reddish-yellow veil cast over the head of a Kurdish bride, remarking about the colour: "Le visage de la fiancée est couvert avec une mouchoir rouge pour que ... les jours de sa vie familiale qui commencera soient rouges (c'est-à-dire heureux)"[6]. Although this yellow-ochre veil covers the face, as is also the case with the black face veil (which will be dealt with later), it must not be viewed in conjunction with it. It is a Kurdish variant of the bridal veiling, referred to in respect of Egyptian Arabs by Lane in the middle of the previous century, where, during the procession to the house, the bride, sitting under a rose or yellow-coloured canopy, is covered by a red Cashmere shawl[7], thus clothed quite differently from the accompanying women in their black, silk coverings and white face veils that reach up to, but do not cover, the eyes.

A similar bridal covering is mentioned by Granqvist in the case of Palestinian Arabs[8]. This veil is described as a thick woollen cloth, similar to the ordinary sack, thrown over the bride's head, hiding the face, whilst a cafton hides the rest of the figure. I had no opportunity of discovering whether the ochre-coloured veil was used in the other feminine milieus.

The white European bridal veil. The existence of the short, transparent red-ochre "bridal" veil, used in the humble village milieu, explains perhaps why the short white Western bridal veil could be adopted into the Kurdish dress scheme. When I saw the white bridal veil in use within the mixed educated and uneducated urban milieu (in Sulaimani), all the other women in the escorting cars were closely veiled in black. The difference between the white bride and the other women corresponds to the difference described by Lane between the Egyptian Arab bride and the women in her train[9].

The white bridal veil lacks the red colour of happiness, but the fact that the bride's car is decorated with ribbons of rose silk tied across it and a rose silk cover is sufficient to atone for this deficiency. The Kurdish white bride stood out from the rest of Kurdish female dress. However, this is perhaps less a breach of tradition than it appears at first sight, for, apart from the colour the white bridal veil seen in Sulaimani, although it seems incompatible with the close veiling otherwise practised in town, gives the bride an appearance which seems in accord with the village traditions.

The black face veil has been taken over from the Turks. It is the Turkish-Kurdish variant of the woman's veil that has been, and in many places still is, worn outside the home in Islamic areas from Morocco in the west to Afghanistan in the east, from Russia and Herzegovina in the north to Aden in the south. In Kurdistan the veil is never worn without an appurtenant over-garment, the *Arab abā* worn as a cowl. I mention this because in Russia in 1936 the same Turkish face veil was seen worn alone with a European coat and skirt. In Baghdad, on the other hand the *abā*-garment was worn, but not the veil. By the irony of fate the veil—originally the sign of an honest woman as opposed to a harlot—is now reserved to prostitutes, who are recognized by it[10].

Sura 24, verses 30-31[11] of the Coran are usually considered to form the religious basis for the

539 [591] 293 562

166 *Analysis of veil types* Sure 24, verses 30-31 of the Coran are usually considered to form the religious basis for the

complete veiling practised by Muslim women, supplemented by the recommendations contained in Sure 33, verse 59, that the wives and daughters of the Faithful put on an over-garment when leaving the house in order that they shall be recognized as honest women. Sure 24, verses 30-31 runs: ("Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts; that is purer for them; surely *Allāh* is aware of what they do). And say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and not display their ornaments except what appears thereof, and let them wear their headcoverings over their bosoms, and not display their ornaments except to their husbands, or their fathers, or the fathers of their husbands, or their sons, or the sons of their husbands, or their brothers, or their brothers' sons, or their sisters' sons, or their women, or those whom their right hands possess, or the male servants not having need (*of women*), or the children who have not attained knowledge of what is hidden of women; and let them not strike their feet so that what they hide of their ornaments may be known; and turn to *Allāh* all of you, O believers! so that you may be successful"[1].

293 [591] 562 562 199

It is maintained that the veiling of women was originally foreign to the Arabs and the prophet Mohammed[2], having been adopted by Islam after the prophet's death in 632 during the years of expansion in Syria and Mesopotamia. Here contact was made with the Hellenic-Byzantine empire where women led a secluded life, a custom preserved from ancient Greece. The veil was adopted as a mark of respectability as opposed to harlotry, and veiling was further extended, justifying this by reference to the two mentioned Suras of the Coran. By obtaining religious backing the veil and shawl or cowl, though varying somewhat in the different Islamic areas, became something quite different from any other clothing. It became a symbol of a religious idea and of a definite pattern of behaviour. By its anonymity, it gave women a liberty that no other dress could provide. It aroused a respect that can only be compared with that shown to a man's habit. Unknown and unrecognizable, she in that dress represented something inviolate and protected. No man could demand to see the face hidden by the veil. Unseen, she was not only herself but also represented half the community, and in virtue of this she could demand consideration and the maintenance of certain privileges. She herself was able to see the one to whom she was speaking, but the reverse was not the case. Woodsmall[3] quotes various statements made by women who had been accustomed to wear, or still were, the veil. An Islamic woman from Alexandria says: "A veil .... presents strange paradoxes. It is a restrictive emphasis on sex relationship, and also on moral promotion; a sign of utter dependence and also of freedom from responsibility; a handicap to real progress and a symbol of special privilege. In a word the veil represents an entirely different social system. Discarding it, therefore, involves a whole change of psychology impossible for a Western woman to understand .... so entirely foreign to you and so much a part of us ....".

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Over-garment and veil were in use in all four feminine environments in Southern Kurdistan, but to very different extents. The women of the village aristocracy did not wear them in daily life, but only when visiting a town (see p. 76). They then wore them from the moment of leaving home until they returned. For the women it was thus a sign that they were leaving a village milieu to enter an urban environment. The name applied to women of the humble village milieu, "Many times in the city at Suleimani I have been addressed by shamefaced women, who, when they raised the veil, proved to

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In residents of Taqueve, where I never saw them veiled. Nor did I ever observe them using the head cloth or the sleeves of the costume to cover the face even if there were male strangers in the vicinity, which Granqvist mentions as being a part of women's pattern of behaviour in Palestine[9].

On the other hand for both the educated and uneducated in the town the over-garment and veil was an indispensible part of women's dress outside the home. It was unthinkable that any woman in a town like Bakimeni or the smaller trading centre, Nahlejo, could leave the house, shut off completely from the street, without taking with them its exclusive in the form of the *abā'a* and *yāšmāk*. These two articles of clothing were obligatory for every girl from the age of 13-14. One of the adolescent daughters in the house of my interpreter had reached this age without it being realized until her father caught sight of her one day, when, clad in a far too tight, washed-out and very shoddy European summer dress, she was about to disappear through the street door, and at once sent one of the women in the house to the *sūq* to buy the necessary *abā'a* and veil. The following day the girl had vanished forever from the town's street scene and an anonymous female figure appeared instead. Women of both the educated and uneducated urban milieu uphold the town practice of concealment when visiting villages. A sister of Sheikh Taffir of Taqueve, a woman in her fifties, paid a long visit to her brother. She clad herself in *abā'a* and veil in order to walk from Taqueve to another village in the neighbourhood. As nobody in this crowding ever carried any burden, she was accompanied on this occasion by an 8 year old daughter of the house who walked behind her on the mountain track carrying a bundle containing gifts. On the day I engaged her, my interpreter arrived at Taqueve closely veiled. She also brought with her by mule over the Chrysoloras pass her black over-garment, and managed in some remarkable way to get this pressed for us, in the dark, with a flask of sharp-steaming peat the logs of our riding animals like a dark flood, we entered the small village of Sargale nestling in a valley behind the mountains. She also sent her 13 year old brother, her inseparable companion, back to to the Sheikh's house at Taqueve to fetch her over-garment and veil when, returning from a visit to the neighbouring village of Rakeve, we discovered that in our absence male guests had been received on the loggia of the guest house. Apart from that she did not wear *abā'a* and veil after the first day in the village. Town women then took with them and used on isolated occasions in the villages the veil and over-garment worn in an urban milieu.

[882]

[992]

Distribution of veil types inside the four villages.

Veil types	Village of Sargale		Nomadic village		Bakimeni urban		Nahlejo urban	
	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married
Triangular cloth + shoulder veil cloth		+		+	+	(+)		+
Head cloth	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Cotton braided veil		+		+				+
Sumptuous white braided veil						+		
Plain veil cloth	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)	+	+	+	+

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4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

WOMAN'S POSSIBILLITY OF MOVEMENT AND SECLUSION

Possibility of movement or greater or lesser degree of seclusion. In the village aristocracy both the married and unmarried women left the area of the home but seldom. As an exception they could be the most distinguished guests at a village wedding. Here they remained in the women's group, strictly segregated from the men. There was no family in the village of equal birth on which they could pay calls. In this respect the women of the village aristocracy held a position similar to that of a lady of a royal family. Their domain comprised the rooms off the courtyard in which the house-work was performed and the roof. They could enter the guest house in order to clean, and could receive female guests there when the men were absent. Their area also extended to the kitchen garden and orchard if such existed in the neighbourhood of the home. On one occasion in Topzawa the wife and daughter in the sheikh's house extended their radius of action to the vineyard up in the mountains in order to pluck fresh vine leaves for culinary purposes. The wife of the house, but not the daughter, went on a family visit to Sulaimani. Both women, with the sheikh and his brother, paid a call, by car, on an Iraqi engineer working with European colleagues on the Dokan Dam Site. This man lived in a stone house similar to those inhabited by Europeans. During the visit the women remained to themselves in the bedroom of the house, which that day acted as the harem, the women eating, drinking tea, and sleeping there in the afternoon.

In the village of Serkan the lady of the house and the wives of the sons received my interpreter and me in the newly-built, detached guest house, which that day had been left to the women as a reception room. At the same time the men of the house were holding a meeting with the government representative of the Land Settlement Commission and a large number of peasants. For this male meeting a temporary open-air guest house had been arranged under some high trees near a spring behind the sheikh's property. Here the men took their meals, conducted their negotiations and spent the night on mattresses rolled out on the ground. During the morning, the representative of the Land Settlement Commission approached the women's apartments in order that I, as a European, could be introduced to his assistants. At the sight of this elderly man entering the women's apartments, the wife and daughters-in-law of the house sprang to their feet and fled in through far an outbreak of fire, assisted by a young husband present, over a narrow passage into a small store room. Similarly, although it had been decided, the lady of the house later cancelled a planned tour of the garden on the ground that there was a faint possibility of the men's party above mentioned being able to catch a glimpse of her face.

A proposal that the daughter of the sheikh at Topzawa should accompany my interpreter, her 13 year old brother and me in a hired car and later cross the mountains by mule on a two-day visit to her own paternal uncle at Sargalu, was bluntly refused by the girl's father. The escort proposed was not considered adequate. Thus what we understand by seclusion was practised within the village aristocracy. Married women seldom left their homes, young girls practically never, and some of them must allow themselves to be seen by male strangers.

In the meantime the following categories of men were permitted access to the family house within the village aristocracy: Firstly, and naturally, the men of the family, the husband, brother-in-law,

and sons. Secondly, distant relatives of the married couples. In addition the family's emergency and three-walled central room were open to men who were subordinates of the sheikh, economically dependent on him, or of a status that could be compared with this. In Tegguere this included the gardeners who ploughed and harvested the sheikh's fields and the drivers who drove the lorries he and his brother had in their capacity of contractors for the construction work at Dolon Dam. The house was also open to beggars and to nuzzahs. The sheikh families at Sergala and Sefaw had both men and women servants. With the latter family there lived permanently a blind *mullah*[1], who occupied the women's part of the house and who, it is true, ate with the women of the house but he was paid by the sheikh and was thus a dependant. Men from the Gendarmerie, members of the Land Settlement Commission, and Europeans were not admitted to the family house where women were. These men were strangers by whom the women must not be seen. It can therefore be said that though seclusion is practised by the village aristocracy, it is in no sheikh home that allowed definite categories of men, dependants in one way or another, access to the women's domain. This elasticity may help to explain the fact that Soane, disguised as a Persian merchant, and later, after the first World War, the British officers of the Mandate period, could be received by Sheikh's first lady, Lady Adela, who after Crown Prince's death became the head of the family. That she regarded Soane, who took employment with her son and of whose nationality she was unaware, as a subordinate there is no doubt. If she also considered the British officers as subordinates compared with her own position as representative of the town's most distinguished family, she would not by meeting them sacrifice any of her dignity or step outside the framework of her seclusion.

Any impression was true, in the aristocratic foreign towns, seclusion was not so severe nor was an order from the men as a wish on the part of the women not to be seen by male strangers.

The sheikh seclusion practised among the Kurds seemed to me to be far more like the British idea of "my home is my castle" than a form of incarceration. In consequence I do not believe that a male investigator is correct when writing that among the Kurds he visited in the Rowanduz district "... the Aghas consistently make a show of being very strict about the seclusion and veiling of their womenfolk when strangers are present while eyewitnesses, if they bother at all, are lax and casual"[2]. In my view it was the women themselves who felt the value of hindering male strangers from seeing them.

In support of this there is what a woman like Blackman says about conditions among the Egyptian *fellahin*: "To our western ideas such restrictions are apt to be regarded as a form of tyranny, but it is not a fair judgement. Seclusion is partly a sign of respect .... and indicates the value that the men put upon their womenfolk"[3]. As a result it is naturally in women's own interest to maintain seclusion. Incidentally, Lane reports of the Arab women in Egypt: "Still it might be imagined that the women of the higher and middle classes feel themselves severely oppressed, and are much discontented with the state of seclusion to which they are subjected; but this is not commonly the case; on the contrary, an Egyptian wife who is attached to her husband is apt to think, if he allows her unusual liberty, that he neglects her, and does not sufficiently love her, and to envy those wives who are kept and watched with greater strictness."[4] Barton states something similar about conditions in India: "The Mohammedan ladies of South India are very strictly secluded, and are proud of it. They look upon it as a mark of respectful care, and are very contemptuous of women who are not taken care of in the same

way[1]". As early as 1901 Carsten remarks that: "The activities of Muslim women, instead of being, as is generally assumed, a result of their "degraded position", is, on the contrary the outcome of the great respect and regard entertained for them by the men of their own nation."[2]

In the Swahili village within the activities of women, fetching water, participation in ploughing and harvesting work, sometimes, in the building of clay houses, the collection of manure and fuel, etc., brought them outside the area of their houses. Even in an Arabic town the maintenance of seclusion was then scrupulously impossible, but it is worthy noticing that no village women from the more villages of Tumbatu and Kizimkazi, from which the Chilean Class drew its Swahili labourers, could be persuaded to take work as house assistants or nurses with the European families. Any such would have been paid for obvious female help in their homes, but the Europeans had to be content with male servants.

A young British engineer who was taking a film in the two villages mentioned in order to provide local colour for weather, longer film about the dhow building, had no chance at all of taking the interior of the family house or the women in the district's courtyard. Despite the elasticity of the seclusion obtaining within the village environment, access for him was ruled out. He could only film the exteriors of village houses with passers women on their way to and from their outdoor occupations. It was worthy of note that none of these women ever stopped or opened a conversation with him. As Wrenda [illegible] definitely the psychology of the veil". One single purdah home was opened to the young Englishman. The husband here did not work on the actual dhow building, but in the office of the Dhow Dhow Bhs, where he learned was and served it to Europeans all day long. In this way he had far more contact with the European settlers than his compatriots, and the fact that he allowed access to his house for the taking of a film must be viewed in that light.

To sum up the conditions among Swahili purdah women: Within over-generous but still in town, the practical reasons there was no possibility of maintaining seclusion. Village women's radius of action was not confined to the home, but comprised fields, watering places, workshops and their plantations. In consequence they possessed far greater freedom of movement than did their more aristocratic sisters. Moreover, although ruthlessly secluded and not subject to seclusion, a division between the men's and women's worlds is maintained outside the actual work; one never see social contact between the two groups. At weddings men and women did not concert. They ate apart, and at dhow I witnessed the women took no part in the dancing. The men in the village danced around evenings roaring, the women hidden in the darkness, watching them from south in the vicinity.

As opposed to the village ladies, the women of the educated urban ladies have a school training behind them. In virtue of this they are able to enter the only two occupations open to Muslim women in Zanzibar: nursing or teaching. Through the former, whether at the Child Welfare Centre or as a visiting nurse calling at the various homes, the educated women in Sokomuni obtained a freedom of movement comparable to that enjoyed by Swahili village women. The same applied to those who chose the teaching profession and worked at Sokomuni's only girl school, the Girls School for Girls, established in 1906.

As regards being restricted geographically there was no seclusion for educated urban women, though in the "transportable" form seclusion existed, for the wearing of overgarment and veil was obligatory. Just as the geographical form of seclusion applying to the women of the village aristocracy was elastic, certain categories of males outside the immediate family circle being admitted to the women's domain, so also was the "transportable" seclusion, for the degree of veiling depended upon the man meeting the woman. If the man was a stranger, say the post-office clerk, bank teller, or taxi driver, complete veiling was maintained. The men on their side accepted it as perfectly natural that women whom they served or bargained with were completely anonymous and, apart from the voice, unidentifiable. Before superiors, for example the educational authorities or officials into the major of the town, my interpreter pushed back her veil though at the same time holding the front edges of the overgarment which goes over the head, so closely together that only a small part of her face was visible. This was the case on more official visits, but also on ordinary visits the tightly-drawn veil and the pushed-back veil were retained. This I saw on a visit to Sheikh Mahmud's son. On this occasion my interpreter had dashed herself out to all the finest articles of clothing and jewellery the women of her family could together produce. During the visit not the slightest glimpse of all this magnificence was disclosed. Perhaps this was due to the fact that, in addition to us, two male agricultural experts were present, who seemed to have come to discuss questions in connection with the bad harvest that year.

When dealing with traders in the city, for example in the cloth bazaar in the medical session, the women also pushed back their veils. Here they apparently found men in a position subordinate to [illegible]

In the Bakhtiari districts, both the veiled and the unveiled, it would have been quite unthinkable for the women, even though closely veiled, to sit in the ordinary seats. The men sat there. For the women and the men of their family who accompanied them there were boxes with special entrances and a curtain. This curtain was not drawn aside until the theatre was dark, and was again drawn at the interval. Men in the audience were not allowed a glimpse of the women in the box.

In her outside life and during work the educated urban woman came into contact with the man's world. Sympathy between two young people might be aroused and a marriage based on personal esteem and sentiment would result. However, there was no direct proposal on the part of the young man. The obligatory procedure was marriage negotiations between the women of the two families, followed by the matter being placed before the father for decision (see p. 139). Whereas the work of an educated urban woman provided her with a radius of action far outside the boundaries of the home, in non-working hours she was to be found in the precincts of the home. In Isfahan hours there were no mixed groups of men and women. Trips, on the other hand, spent their free time in the streets or in the bazaars in company with other men. Here again there was a strict division between the worlds of men and women.

Thus, like her humble village sister, the educated urban woman possessed a freedom of movement that extended just so far as, but no further than, her work outside the home justified, but, as opposed to the village woman, the educated urban woman practised a transportable seclusion in the form of shut and veil. This, like the seclusion of the aristocratic village women, possessed a certain elasticity in regard to certain male categories.

562 In some of the three Kurdish environments we considered was the idea of liberty understood in the same way as it is in the West.

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562 In the Kurdish and Iraki Kurdish environments, the unmarried urban ladies, the ruling men obligatorily appeared in their educated visions the unmarried also restricted seclusion. Working in their daily activities brought them into contact with the man's world. Household purchases were attended to by the husband. I was also told that goods connected with dress were bought from house to house by women. However, women's social-all world was not confined to the home, for all women's agencies in the town were in contact with each other. A concern of female visitors entered the home, the women of which frequently visited other homes. Under cover of inexpressible seclusion there was considerable freedom within the urban women's world. In consequence, unmarried women in town obtained an opportunity of contact that lay on a quite different social plane from that applying to the more urban feminine milieu. Among humble village women the same possibility naturally applied. Here, however, it took place just as much at watering and washing places, etc., less in the homes. In the unmarried feminine milieu in Kurdistan, subjected to the veil and seclusion, a decisive barrier existed between the man's and woman's worlds, not only in leisure but also in working hours.

591 For a man married to one or two wives in the unmarried woman's milieu in a town like Sulaimaniyah, one friend whom [illegible] described as typical of a Turkish home: "For an Oriental the home is the [illegible] 595 home is either his shop or his favourite café, where he meets the people whose company constitutes his spiritual content ...".

562 In the unmarried feminine environment in Sulaimaniyah as represented by my interpreter's home, 352 with its two wives whose sphere of work fell within the framework of the home, the actual place of work could, exceptionally, be moved to the family area of another home. When baking a large supply of bread, the dough for which was prepared by an outside woman who arrived at dawn, the two housewives later in the morning transferred the actual operation to the home of a neighbour. Here there was a modern, jar-shaped clay oven that could be used by several women simultaneously. This was more effective than the ovens two doors had over the fire that enlivened the daily meals.

572 Visits and return visits constituted the social contact with the outside world. In my experience the 594 educated women in the home only made purchases in the city and then only of materials, cereal, of 443 meat and vegetables. As mentioned, the daily household purchases were made by the husband and delivered by small boys, of whom there were several, who in this way established contacts with their boss. That women did not shop at the meat and vegetable stalls was not considered in any form of opposition, in fact my impression was precisely the same as Woodsmall's, who writes: "... as a rule the conservative Moslem women in the past did not do her own shopping ... For the women of the past, their lack of freedom for personal shopping was doubtless not regarded as an infringement on their liberty but a convenience"[16].

562 An investigation as to which area beyond the immediate family circle had access to the homes of 423 unmarried urban women disclosed that certain traders or artisans were admitted. A half-blind rug-

Sulaimani, who had to make some sandwiches and pillows on the occasion of the wedding, arrived one morning at my interpreter's home. He hung up in the courtyard his sterling horse with which he would thoroughly beat the cotton, converting the thick grey lumps into white, airy bedding. Later in the afternoon this horse-musical action was put into the same mode by the women and the upholsterer then completed the sewing. This work, which took a whole day, was done in the women's section of the house. The upholsterer left twice during the day to have his meals in the town.

Very occasionally a lesser tailor, an old man, was admitted to the house to measure me for a quilted cotton. Certain goods, such as rugs, etc., were brought by traders to be viewed. However, these men never entered the women's precincts, never getting further than the front door, and when going out to see them the women tied a head cloth tightly round head and neck. The same thing happened when a man with three donkeys came up the three steps of the house into the tiled hall to unload the supply of wheat for the coming winter. This was brought in large, woven goatskin sacks (*gūnī*), and was unloaded behind the curb in the hall. I never saw the two wives in my interpreter's home go to a cinema. During garden parties, on the day devoted to family visits, they accompanied their common husband or went visiting alone.

The part of their daily activities brought them outside the home or into contact with the men's world. Their contacts with the women's world in the town were on the other hand unlimited. This fourth feminine environment thus maintained complete seclusion, that is to say those external ring and Western world unknowingly with a position of bondage.

COMMON DOMESTIC LIFE

The distribution of authority and men's position in the home. The family's economy among the village aristocracy was naturally attended to by the men. It was also he who decided whether or not a 10 year old son could go on a family visit from Tuqueve to Kirkuk or Baghdad. Equally, it obviously rested with the Shaikh of Tuqueve to say whether or not he would accept me, my interpreter and her young brother as paying guests.

Like all rural women, the women of the village aristocracy were completely illiterate, whereas their husbands and sons had been able to acquire at all events some book learning. Despite lack of schooling a woman could be extremely intelligent. This was evinced by the way she arranged her complicated daily tasks and ran the home, children, and husband. Besides, she knew her job, was highly qualified domestically, trained as housewife and mother from an early age. Within the home she was entirely man's equal. The family rooms were her domain where the husband was accepted and shown his correct place. In the cases where the wife's intelligence was greater than the husband's, it is a moot point whether she were could be said to possess an equal status in the home. Hay suggests as much when writing about conditions in Southern Kurdistan: "How much are to a greater or less extent under the thumbs of their womenfolk."[19]

In regard to freedom, that Western concept into which attempts are made to adapt features of an entirely different social pattern like the Islamic, it can be said the women of the village aristocracy were

not "free", being subjected to an absolutely practical seclusion. They were free to choose their partners, but for that matter the men were here in no better case: both were subject to the decision of the family.

As mentioned earlier, women's tasks of active in the humble village milieu extended over the whole place, and consequently they had far greater freedom of movement than their aristocratic village sisters. On the other hand, as far as I could see, they were not as much the equals of their husbands as were their social superiors. Very heavy labours rested on their shoulders, work that kept them engaged from dawn until late in the evening: fetching water and fuel from afar, walking in the countryside, ploughing and harvesting, work in the fruit plantations. Within this environment one can say that there was a lack of equality and a distribution of authority in favour of the men, mainly because the uneven sharing of the work put the woman in an inferior position.

In regard to the educated urban milieu in homes where both husband and wife were educated, a freedom of movement corresponding to that of humble village women existed in the case of the wife, that is to say as much as, but no more than, her work outside the home necessitated.

Within the uneducated urban milieu there was no possibility of movement outside the home in connection with work, and liberty of movement resulting from social activities, and the daily visits between women, was concealed by veil and over-garment. Within the home the husband had the say in regard to the persons entering and leaving the home. In my interpreter's home where the two wives belonged to the uneducated milieu, the husband forbad the summoning of a doctor during the influenza epidemic in the summer of 1957, and refused to allow several patients in the family being taken by cab to a doctor or hospital. It is difficult to say how strictly this injunction would have been respected had one of the patients been seriously ill.

During periods besides the husband permitted his younger wife, accompanied by an adult escort, one of the adolescent daughters and a baby, to pay a family visit to Hulaija. The wife extended the visit by several days on her own initiative, the party proceeding with a hired car to another branch of the family. On the wife's return she was violently reprimanded for this by her husband. How would a husband's position can be in a polygamous home with adult daughters was on this occasion demonstrated. Faced by a united feminine front of two wives and five daughters, and the visible and invisible aid from neighbouring homes, he was forced to beat an unconditional retreat. As Canaan says about conditions in a Muslim home of this kind: "L'homme a contre soi toutes les femmes de son foyer, et toutes celles des foyers voisins, et toutes celles de la ville .... conditions alléantoires, contraires et capricieuses", and goes on to say: "..... Ces affreux tyrans, le maître de leurs, avoid de pouvoir chasse et des droits les plus sevidents, n'ont probablement le nerf le plus tranquil qui soit au monde ....". As I saw it, a woman belonging to the uneducated urban milieu, continually in contact with neighbouring women, was in a remarkably strong position, and the husband, despite his right of decision in many respects, in a correspondingly weaker one. On the other hand, when employing Western terminology, we must describe her seclusion as a manifestation of a state of bondage.

4: Human E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Hard MA11

THE MAN'S POSITION IN THE HOUSE

The man's place in the home. The man's place in the home must be viewed in conjunction with the distribution of authority between men and women. 562 369 592

Within the village aristocracy the guest house was the man's particular domain. In addition, his realm of action was the world outside the home. He moved about the village, frequented his fields, paid visits to other villages and travelled to Baghdad, Kirkuk or Sulaimaniyah on business and pleasure. His freedom of movement was limited only by time, wage, and economic circumstances. At the same time he was a semi-partner in the life lived in the family section of the home. (This is to narrow a matter of essence, but it had no parallel in any of the other three milieus.) He not only ate and slept in the home, but also spent some hours of the day in the family circle. During the time I witnessed daily life in the Sheikh's home at Tuqawa, I noticed that relations between husband and wives were warm, lively, and pleasant. The presence of two female strangers, my interpreter and I, passed off easily and naturally. Male relatives arriving on longer or shorter visits also joined the family life, and a common life existed in the other homes of the village aristocracy that I visited.

In the humble village milieu, on the other hand, the man spent his leisure hours with the other men of the village in the tea house or sheltered with groups in the village bazaar. Village men donned clean outer coverings before a wedding in order to utilize some conditions who had arrived. In the village milieu there was far greater possibilities for a male group life than obtained for the village aristocracy, and consequently the division between the worlds of men and women—so characteristic of Muslim areas—was accentuated. 562 369 519 525

At first sight a common life within the home was to be expected in the educated urban milieu, but there was surprisingly little of this. The men would be seen sitting in the street outside the tea house, walking around together in the streets or in the park, which was only open to women on one day of the week when men were excluded. From the point of view of work, for example in the schools, there was in the educated urban milieu no division between the men's and women's worlds. The division arose in leisure hours when the women either paid or received visits at which no men were present. Mixed parties with married couples were unknown. The home then belonged to the women in the leisure hours, the men spending their time with other men. During a visit my interpreter and I paid to one of her female colleagues, married to a male colleague, the husband was at home. To give the impression of being unaccustomed to, and not quite happy about, the situation, existed out of consideration for a European guest. On another occasion when several women teachers called, all colleagues of the wife, he was not present. As in the humble village milieu, the educated urban community split into two worlds outside working hours, each going its own way. 562 369 519

This division appeared to be purest form in the home of my interpreter. Here the father only returned home to eat his meals and to spend the night. The rest of the time he passed in his small business in the town. He was a representative of a Baghdad firm that supplied electrical articles. His leisure 562 593

4: Human E-1 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

HS THESIS

562 hours were spent at his favourite tea house or in the streets. The division applied also to the adolescent sons, who in their latency years were sent out from the home to obtain a "street education" (see 593 p. 114, 115). Only small boys of from 3 to 6 years of age still belonged in the home, that is to say, the 595 women's world. For an outsider it seemed that this separation of the two sexes during the day caused 562 the men to inhabit a world utterly devoid of women. From the houses, besides, or on benches were 517 seen only anonymous, concealed figures known past. No woman's face or form was visible. When Obeyd[9] says that in Oriental areas a man outside his home meet the persons—other men—who constitute his spiritual content, he is quite right as regards conditions in a Kurdish town like Sulaimani. However, this can be extended to mean that the men also meets in other men persons who come to mean something for him in other ways. The social conventions of Kurdish men entered at times a homosexual stage; they could be seen walking together with arms ringed waists, holding hands [838] and interlacing fingers.

Within the home there seemed to be remarkable little room for him. A peg or nail on the wall for 593 his clothes, a place on the floor by the stove tray, a mattress or iron bedstead wherever he had decided 562 to sleep—that was all. Man's position in the home was clearly demonstrated one evening in my interpreter's home. A women's party was in progress when the master of the house and his 20 year old son returned at about 10 p.m. In the courtyard, some twenty-five women were seated on chairs, mattresses and clumsy sofas, their black over-garments and veils hanging on pegs in the hall. Most of the women [359] present were not allowed to be seen by the two men. It was technically impossible for so many women to mask simultaneously to obtain their shif and veils, and they therefore decided by their behaviour to create an intangible, but insurmountable, barrier between the two sexes. The men acted as though they were invisible, and the women pretended that they had not observed anyone entering the only entrance to the house. Slipping behind the row of seated women, the men disappeared into the rooms to change into their home and sleeping dress—a long striped shirt over white pants for the elder men and pyjamas for the youngest. Re-appearing, they once more stole past the seated women, and made their way to the corner of the courtyard where the ladder to the roof was leaning. Up this they vanished into the gloom. Neither the women nor the men exchanged the customary salutation. On this special occasion neither side was able to notice the presence of the other. There was nothing for the men to do but disappear from view, and as the women were occupying the area of the whole house, this meant going to bed on the roof.

The way this house was arranged, very few square metres seemed to be left at the disposal of the 593 husband and the grown-up son. Of course, in this case it was the common home of two wives. However, 595 there was very little more room for the man who had his two wives installed in separate, twin houses 562 in Kirkuk. I had no opportunity to discover how the guest room, which was the one room common to both houses, functioned if the husband had male guests. To judge by similar cases in my interpreter's house it can be assumed that the women prepared refreshments, but kept to themselves in another room, cut off from the guest room by a passage that led from the street to the courtyard, or retired to the courtyard itself and the small rooms surrounding it. However, the guest room was not the husband's living room in the ordinary way. The two apartments together formed a home possessing two entrances from the street, but were inside unconnected. Each was a woman's home where the husband

4: Human E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

was in turn received as an honoured guest. To illustrate both a husband's position in a Kurdish Muslim home opposed to a young Englishman, I quote a letter received from one of the British engineers at the Dukan Dam Site who, with his wife, visited my interpreter's home after my departure: "Our visit .... almost coincided with a wedding of one of the sisters there .... It is certainly a women's world in that household. The day after the wedding, the next day that we were there, the new husband was nowhere to be seen, and when we asked where he was we got the answer that already they had got tired of him kicking his heels round the house and they had sent him out in the town." As Watelin[9] says of the Egyptian *fellahin* women: "Though theoretically they are supposed to be entirely in subjection to the male sex, in practice they can, and often do, maintain a very firm hold on their husbands .... Indeed, I am often inclined to think that it is the poor oppressed Egyptian man who has a claim to my sympathy, and that the over-ruled, oppressed wife is somewhat of a myth".

In regard to possibility of movement and the distribution of authority between men and women, it appears from the foregoing that the four feminine milieux within the area investigated evince the following picture (see diagram).

Distribution of power between sexes in four milieux

Feature / division	Village community		Kurdish village		Educated urban		Uneducated urban	
	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married	unmarried	married
Face veil and shift	(+)	(+)	(+)	(+)	-	-	+	+
Seclusion	-	-					+	+
Freedom of movement			+	+	+	+		
Position of women	equal to men		inferior to men		equal to men		superior to men	
Common life	+							
Polygamy	+		(+)				-	-

I *In the village community:* No veil, but the maintenance of seclusion. Equal distribution of authority between men and women. A certain common life exists outside the home.

II *In the Kurdish village milieu:* Neither veil nor seclusion. Distribution of authority in the man's favour. Slight or no common life inside the home, that is to say the maintenance of the social barrier between the men's and women's worlds.

III *In the educated urban milieu:* Use of the veil, but no seclusion. Equal distribution of authority between men and women. Slight common life in the home, thus the maintenance of the social barrier between the worlds of men and women.

IV *In the uneducated urban milieu:* Both veil and seclusion. Distribution of authority to women's advantage. No common life in the home, thus the maintenance of a barrier between the worlds of men and women.

It is hoped that it appears from the foregoing how difficult it is to use the term "free position" (or lack of it) and "equality" (or lack of it) when it is a matter of the Kurdish variant of the Islamic cultural pattern. Seclusion cannot be compared with the lack of liberty that existed in our culture until the

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middle of the last century. While her exclusion the Kurdish woman, like other Islamic women, is assured by the law and by the Coran of rights quite other than those accorded Western women prior to their emancipation[9]. Kurdish women were not suppressed. Even the humble village woman were no more suppressed than any woman in a peasant community could be when the biggest share of the work falls to her lot. It was a physically, not a legally, inferior status.

K 512

Nor are there any grounds for talking about lack of equal rights because men and women in Kurdistan each have their own pattern of life. One might as well say that a man had not the same rights as a woman because he was unable to follow her pattern of life. The world of men and women were simply divided, more or less (mostly more) from the cradle to the grave. One can therefore talk of an existing justification for this division, with a deviation in favour of the men within the humble village milieu, and in favour of the women in the educated urban milieu.

ANALYSIS OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE KURDISH WOMAN'S CULTURAL PATTERN IN THE LIGHT OF THE COMING "EMANCIPATION"

K 1178

It is a fact that the Kurdish Muslim area, like other Muslim territories, is on the threshold of a transformation. The introduction of the necessary industrialization to improve the material side of this technically-underdeveloped country was, in 1957, practically on the doorstep. Even though these changes in the structure of society will last much the Kurds, that political necessity in immediate difficult of access, the years ahead will take bring this area into the melting pot.

K 114

In conclusion, therefore, a glance must be cast on the culture pattern of the Kurdish woman, a culture unmoved, if not to death, at all events to violent change, and some of the conditions existing in 1957 are judged in their relation to coming reconstruction. As mentioned in the introduction, I had in the picture of my interpreter, an example of the most "advanced" Sunnitic type among the Kurdish women studied. When placing the word "advanced" in inverted commas I do so advisedly.

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As a rule one overlooks the fact that cultures older than our own, despite the lack of our Western technical facilities, may in other directions represent a more advanced culture stage, and that a change caused by bitter economic necessity so far from representing progress may, on the contrary, well have to be paid for by retrogression in other spheres. At first sight the introduction of the Western woman's form of life is regarded as being of direct benefit to women with foreign culture patterns. It thus seems surprising that the abolition of the veil, the dropping of seclusion and so forth meets with opposition from women at some places. A few examples of this are quoted.

K 943 1971 114

In the Muslim areas of Yugoslavia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the veil was abolished by Marshal Tito in 1952. Two years later, when visiting these provinces, I was told that it cost a woman three months' employment to retain the black veil and chaugarak over-garment which, only recently, I

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Hard MA11
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He writes[1]: "As an excuse for the ban [of the wearing of veil and over-garments] the reformers stated that dangerous criminals and adherents of Turkish régime all too easily could hide themselves under the long, sombre "feradje", the black "yarchal", and the flimsy "yaschmak", transparent only from inside, which naturally afforded the best security against search, and it is an undoubted fact that many a spy and criminal has concealed himself under this woman's dress, that veils and hides all forms". Rygaard likewise accuses[2] that "... the so-called emancipation of the Turkish woman is regarded with some justification by many Turks as being an abandonment of a natural possession, and that the Turkish desire to guard his women strictly in the home must be viewed as a symptom of modesty and not be credited to the very widespread, but erroneous, impression that he jealously wishes to hide entirely private existences in his harem under the most humiliating conditions".

Should one wish to learn about conditions in these Turkish harems prior to Kemal Atatürk's day, one can hardly do better than to apply to the women themselves. We have an account of conditions under the Sultanate just before the first World War, written by an Arab Sherifa, Mashuk Hanim. As daughter of a brother of the Sherif of Mecca, who dwelt in a castle on the Asiatic side of the Bosporus as the "guest" of the Sultan of Turkey, and with an English mother, she grew in her memoirs (published 1949) a woman's assessment of life in an Arab-Turkish upper-class home. Mashuk Hanim[3] quotes elegy: "... those well-guarded, exclusive and dignified homes—the harems".

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[13]

Regarding the beginnings of the transformation of the Oriental woman's life in Turkey to a Western pattern, she writes: "With the rapid decline of old constraints, breaking until old customs, all that the women got in their place was the doubtful liberty of being able to go out when and where they liked, instead of being guarded and protected as they always have been, always attended and back in their homes by sunset". Incidentally, she strongly denounces the descriptions that have appeared in book form or in articles that purport to provide an authentic picture of the life of a Muslim woman in Turkey. "... in all the years which Mashuk spent in Turkey, never did she see European being either allowed or accepted into the Imperial circle, or those of other great homes. Great Eastern ladies were not in the habit of receiving inquisitive and curious foreigners. If occasionally an Ambassador's wife or that of a Consul-General was permitted to visit the Harem, it was done most ceremoniously, and no lady guests ever relaxed her polite and formal hospitality into intimate friendship. So those so-called intrepid travellers and globe-trotting journalists could only pick up their impressions and ideas from some waiter-maid Levantine, or from some self-styled and much-advertised "Hanoum"[4].

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It was symptomatic that in Iraqi Kurdistan it was among the young men[5] and not among the women that I met a definite wish for a change of existing conditions. It was among the young men who had studied at the University of Beirut, or who had been trained in Europe or America, that one found talk of, as an ideal for the future, "an educated wife" and monogamy. The right people in the West are many inclined to envy the Orient's exercise of polygamy, one apparently not a right they wished to avail themselves of in the future. From what I saw of the men's position in the home, particularly within the modernized urban Kurdish milieu, it was understandable that a man could

G Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

dream of not having to face a veiled woman's front of, say, mother, whose humility shown by the women of his family, plus sisters, daughters half and fully grown, who ordered his life from start to finish. In an "educated wife" he hoped to obtain compensation for the social and emotional contact he was now forced to seek during the hours of day with other men.

This leads us to a discussion of the Islamic and thus the Kurdish woman's marital position and the marriages arranged by the family. As already mentioned, the choice of a young man's married partner is practically always left to the women of his family, that is to say the mother or step-mother and sisters, whereafter the matter is laid before the father for approval. In regard to the fact that married couples in many cases have never seen each other before the marriage is to be consummated, the general Western idea is that it must be difficult for a young girl to be given to an unknown man. However, it must be equally trying for the young man. This is also pointed to by Granquist when she says[1]: "In what concerns a woman's lack of freedom in her marriage the same thing holds good to a great extent of the young man".

It was characteristic that the brother of Sheikh Taffir in Tuparwa, who was thinking of going to Europe, asked me if it really was true that one could walk up to any woman in the street and offer her marriage. That was his first impression of liberty of choice in Europe. He had never envisaged any sentimental basis for marriage.

The young woman is thus selected by the women with whom she will have to live and work, as the young couple usually dwells in the bridegroom's home. She must beforehand feel highly-priced by the bride price paid out on the contraction of marriage, which is expended to a greater or lesser degree on the luxury with which she is to be surrounded. In most cases she knows the women who are to be her daily companions and fellow-workers. From her own home she is well trained in the domestic work that can be expected of her. She has been brought up with the quite natural idea that her most important destiny and greatest happiness is to be allowed to bear children. From the years spent in the home among other women she has heard and witnessed everything worth knowing about the difficulties of matrimonial relations. She is not expected to be her husband's comrade on a spiritual or intellectual level. The basis for the joint family idea, with several generations housed within the the same building is a married life of a different nature, less organized than in our culture pattern. During the day the husband, even among the village aristocracy, has little opportunity of companionship with his wife, as the great boundary between the form of life of men and women compelled him to seek the society of other men, whilst on her side the woman enters the feminine half of the community. On entering marriage, a young woman, in addition to her own personal qualities, is regarded as a representative of a whole family, with which it has been felt desirable to become allied. She arrives in an aura of her own family's glory. She herself had no personal expectations beyond the advantages to be derived from the married state and the fulfilment of a woman's natural desire to have children. As young people in good families had not seen much other before marriage, it was obvious that no sentimental basis existed on which to meet the union, but this did not mean that love on a high degree of sympathy might not develop between husband and wife and that this was quite

sufficient to ensure an harmonious life together, particularly because the sphere pattern more or less separated the couple during the day. The young woman was thus faced with demands she was able to fulfil, highly-valued beforehand, with a prospect of a gain if greater sympathy or love was built between herself and her mate. She was but little subjected to comparison with other women, for in his outside life the husband never met them; the wives of his friends he never saw. In the house he met only those with whom marriage was out of the question. The threats to her marriage were thus not the chances that at his place of work or in society her husband met and fell in love with another woman, but were far more logically justified. If life together proved impossible, both husband and wife could secure the dissolution of the marriage (see p. 121). Should she bear no children, or no sons, her extra wife was justified. This might mean that the family of the other wife stipulated that the first wife should be repudiated, or that the two women could not tolerate daily life together. By the stipulation of a large sum to be set aside for the contingency of divorce, the wife's family assured the bride beforehand as adequately as was humanly possible.

The man, on the other hand, gave everything he owned at the time, perhaps assisted by his family, for a woman who was certainly to the taste of his female relatives, but not necessarily to his. Should he not like his bride after the marriage had taken place, he had in the first place invested a lot of money in this disappointment, and secondly had to maintain his case against the women of his family, who had selected her. A new wife of the four mentioned by the Quran, depending upon one's economic circumstances, was another unknown ticket in the marriage lottery.

From the moment a man passed from the unmarried state, he was for the rest of his life the head of a family. As the bride price was paid when marriage was contracted, the husband had not only the right but also the duty to keep the children[1] in the event of divorce. Quite small children, as a rule, stayed with the mother until they had reached a certain age, but then returned to the father. In the event of a Arab marriage a man thus had no chance of leaving his children. The new wife, or wives, who entered his home took over the work of looking after the brood of children that might already be there. This provided the children with a stable home and childhood, something that is not always the case in the West. The constant factors in the home were thus, theoretically, the father and the children, whilst the mother was the fluctuating point. This gave father, mother and children a mutual status quite different from the position of these three home elements in our culture.

Considerable attention has been paid to the difficulties that could arise between women when one more of the four wives mentioned by religion was acquired. Little attention has been paid, on the other hand, to the difficulties facing the new wife when the home she entered had adolescent or adult children. Nor has much consideration been given to the possibility that the stationary children, whose [illegible] father is unable to marry off, may intervene in favour of their mother after she has been remarried by the father. My interpreter's mother, for example, was repudiated and sent back to her family, leaving behind her three children aged about 6, 7 and 8 (see p. 175). When these children reached the age of discretion, they demanded the return of their mother, and the father was forced to give way.

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With the introduction of monogamous marriage and divorce that not only gets rid of the wife, but also dissolves the children's home, a phenomenon hitherto unknown will arise in Kurdistan and other Islamic areas that are copying our pattern of culture, the solitary mother: on the one hand the solitary divorced mother, and on the other, the result of women's entry into the labour market, the solitary unmarried mother.

Although it has been maintained from several quarters[1] that the veil and seclusion, women's subordinate social position, were originally foreign to the Arabs and to Muhammad, and were first adopted by Islam when the Arabs came into contact with the Greek-Hellenic, Byzantine culture, the fact remains that this related status obtained religious sanction from Sura 24, verse 31 of the Koran. Consequently, the veil and seclusion are as much a religious as a secular matter. The law of Islam *Sari'a* goes far deeper than does Roman law. The ordinances of the Koran, the whole *fiqh* system, comprises every detail of existence, and constitutes a practical guide, a pattern of behaviour[2]. The restrictions resulting therefrom were maintained by Kurdish women in Iraq with the greatest seriousness, respect and care in all four feminine milieus.

In general, attention has been paid to the fact that women in Muslim homes where seclusion was maintained to a greater or lesser degree, were confined to certain parts of the house. There is therefore reason to point out that the man may equally well be said to be excluded from the women's apartments of all the other homes he may visit. In Kurdish villages only the guest room, a part of the squire's house, was open to him. In towns he was permitted to enter the guest room (without a glance at the courtyard) and to leave the house again just as discreetly. The core of the home was the forbidden area; the women there were the people he was not allowed to see. From the time a boy passed a certain age, a wall was suddenly raised between him and the women's world; he was shut out and relegated to the society of other men and the streets. The women belonging to his own home formed an exception.

The banks, post offices and public offices I visited were as gloomy and cheerless as barracks. A chair at a street corner or a tea house bench was the womanless world to which a male was relegated on reaching manhood. It seemed to me that the men in their male world did not thrive as much as did the women and children in their half of society. Sometimes or other the women seemed to have discovered a more lively and friendly social connection between themselves than had the men, or, for that matter, than we have in the West. Under cover of the veil women were able to move about in the men's world. Outside the home their world was not devoid of men to the same extent that the men's world was devoid of women. Even though women were veiled in the street they were able to see. In many cases they were also able to talk, trade and bargain with men in the city, in banks and in post offices. They could see whom they were addressing; men saw only a black veil.

In view of the great part that confinement with the rules of Islam played in the life of Kurdish women, her positive attitude to the five pillars of Islam (see chapter V), any change in her life pattern in this quarter would involve a complete transformation. It is not surprising then the altered life of women in Turkey has led to personal break in hand with a sweetened attitude on all things Arab and

4: Hansen E-5 (1957) 1961 MA11 Kurd MA11

particularly on the time taken up during the day by religion and the attention to be paid to it. None of the educated women with whom I resided said prayers daily (see p. 148). The fact that they worked outside the home as school teachers, hospital or visiting nurses, was such a breach of the original Islamic posture in which the exercise of religion in daily life demanded both time, place and attention which were difficult to reconcile with any kind of constant and effective work. My interpretation, a re-presentative of the best-educated Kurdish women of the present time, had sacrificed her active participation in Islam's religious practices. However, by so doing, she lost the right and duty to break off from even the most pressing work in order to concentrate on spiritual matters. In consequence, some of the dignity of daily life disappeared, for quarrels and dramatics are difficult when regularly broken by the necessity of prayer. If women are enrolled into an effective conveyor band system outside the home, religion - and the peace of mind that goes with it - will be largely lost to them.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BASIS ON WHICH THE EMANCIPATION OF THE EUROPEAN WOMAN BEGAN AND THAT EXISTING IN MUSLIM AREAS

If we compare conditions in the West with those in Islamic areas the following differences are apparent:

When the women's emancipation movement began in Western society in the previous century, two worlds existed for women over a certain age: that of the wife and that of the old maid. Due to the fact that all women within a community like the Kurdish and other Muslim societies possessed the possibility of living the life of a normal woman - to be married and bear children - there has never been in Mohammedan countries a group of matrimonially-superfluous women, the type mainly behind the Western's movements in the West. Even today in Western communities the first thing stated about a woman - apart from the position she may personally have acquired - is whether she is married or not, Mrs. or Miss. From the point of view of career it has always been, and still is, in the Western world of greater advantage for a woman to enter marriage than it is for a man - quite contrary to conditions in Kurdistan. To remain unmarried in the Islamic world is, as maintained by several quarters[1], an impossibility, a view to which the Kurds subscribe. All a young man's energies are therefore concentrated on saving up money for a living bride price.

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[1] The difference in the view of the bride price as viewed from the outside world and as seen from inside - in this case in Egypt - is stressed by Granqvist when she writes: "As a matter of fact there is a very close connection between the bride price given and the value ascribed to a woman. But while the Arabian women would consider it a shame and disparagement if nothing or too small a bride price

4: Hainem E-5 (1957) 1961 MA 11 Hard MA 11

were given, and while it is clear that the husband himself would look down upon such a wife, and that the public opinion would belittle her and therefore a high bri[illegible] price is looked upon as a protection and a guarantee that a woman shall be honoured and well treated. Europeans have looked at the facts differently and said: so low is the position of the woman that s[illegible] is bought. Now people among whom bride price is customary do not understand the Western idea that a woman is cheap when no bride price is thought to be worth a bride price. Here two completely different points of view clash and in each case only the objectionable in the opposite view is considered; shows how much people's judgement depends on customs, which is no certain or absolute measure / value"[illegible].

What is now being offered the Muslim woman in various ways, and what will be offered the Kurdish woman sooner or later, is the abandonment of a protected, if valued position, she will be asked to renounce being an essential link in a man's career, the entrance whereby he can raise himself to the more socially-valued married state.

Instead she will obtain the partial equality we know in the West. In place of the clearly-accorded special position based on the difference of the sexes, she will acquire a partial equality with the opportunity to compete with men in all walks of life. At times [illegible] her efforts in the sphere that have hitherto been reserved to her will be correspondingly re-prized.

As the industrialisation of the country progresses, a [illegible] of women's domestic activities will, as has happened in other countries, be transferred to tradeable all its consequences, both good and bad. Her family-anchored culture pattern, sanctioned by Islam, will collapse, though not by her wish, rather the reverse.

In the event of divorce and the adoption of monogamy, a stationary home that has to be created for children will be dissolved. The solitary, divorced mum and the deserted unmarried mother will become social features to be incorporated into the economy structure, as it about to be the case in our culture, where the number of solitary women has re-reached such proportions that it can neither be overlooked nor concealed. The elderly will not have a place in the joint family, and the homes will no longer be able to afford protection to girls. [illegible] *is only logically justified provided a home exists* where the girl could, protected from the difficulties of life, and her parents— and not herself—arrange [illegible] her marriage.

The older members of the family are deprived of the rightful duty to plan the marriages of the young and thus extend their family connections with consequent [illegible] for the individual. The emotional choice of a married partner will become universal. As the young gradually take their fate into their own hands they will neglect their personal responsibility for their elders, which will be taken over by the State.

When saying that women are "emancipated" in Islamic areas when the veil, and when it stands for, is abolished, this change in her way of life cannot be compared with what happened to the Western woman when emancipated at the turn of the century. It is true that the life pattern of Islamic women

137 is being re-modelled to resemble our own, but the structure of the pattern being transformed is not
● 50 at all like the one that prevailed in the West when women's position was definitely improved.

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114 What has been said will, perhaps, explain why difficulties arise when governments in Islamic areas declare that women are to be "liberated" and the veil abolished. That certain advantages accrue to the sexes by these changes is obvious, but the difficulties that have arisen suggest that the Islamic woman has to abandon some rights and advantages that her sisters in the West made clear. Perhaps, then, this investigation into the life of the Kurdish women as it is to-day—or rather, as it was in 1957—on the threshold of transformation, but still representing, if not a typically Islamic cultural position, at least certain features that apply to other Islamic areas, may serve to cast light on the question.

The male finds most of his work in the fields; his 542
is also the privilege of looking after the horse. The other animals are tended by the women, who do the milking and preparing of food, and other household duties, including semi-plastering of the house interior every fall. The roof on the other hand is kept in repair by the men. In the busy season the women also assist in the fields, especially during the grain harvest and in tobacco picking. The smaller children share in these latter tasks, and, among less well-to-do people at least, serve as shepherds for the smaller flocks. There is also a series of smaller jobs, such as collecting dung for fuel about the parks and cow-cracks.

Table II.

COMPOSITION OF HOUSEHOLDS IN FOUR KURDISH VILLAGES

[542 542]

	non-tribal		tribal		totals	
	Kurd Bard	Arabicum	Kurd Bard	Tergeh		
widow and children	3	10	3	3	19	
elementary family (and plural wives)	20	20	7	8	57	
" + husband's mother	3	1	1	1	6	93 = 71 %
" + husband's mother and unmarried siblings	1	1	—	—	2	
" + husband's unmarried siblings	—	3	1	1	5	
" + husband's father and unmarried siblings	1	—	—	—	1	
patrilineal extended family	3	4	1	1	13	13 = 10 %
other (incomplete families)	—	9	2	3	14	
Total number of families					130	

The general form of the Kurdish village households may be seen in Table II. Only 10 % of the households could be called patrilineal extended families, vs. 71 % consisting of an elementary family or a group of dependents maintained by an elementary family. Each household is an independent economic unit, except for a certain insurance in the form of the obligations to support survivors in

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7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MAII Kurd MAII

community concerned, and rivalry between members is directed towards out-doing each other in the eyes of the group as a whole. [537]

Roofless society. An other immediately apparent type of informal group which is commonly formed is that of roofless society. The unskilled room houses a more public and essentially closed society; roofless society includes more diverse persons, and emerges from practically any aggregation of individuals who are not engaged in productive pursuits. There is a tendency for the individuals of the highest prestige to stay away from such groups, since the joking and horse-play may be rather personal and quite free, and the rules of «proper» behavior easily forgotten. Thus, though formed from an open aggregation of individuals, which any male transient as well as villager may join, it develops in practice into a gang of village youths and men, primarily the younger and more irresponsible, and the men of lower class status.

The same problems that are debated in the unskilled room may also be discussed here, but with less stress on policy forming and more stress on the unskilled. Prestige differences in the group emerge very clearly from who is made fun of and who finds in a position to conform. At the same time, the group serves as a forum for complaints against abuses. Here the attitudes of the less privileged sections of the village to specific issues become coordinated; pressures are applied and excitements created that may lead to concerted action where persons feel they have been badly wronged.

Women's groups. Women are excluded from both these types of groups, as well as from ephitrich activities in general. Though they prepare the food that may be consumed in the unskilled room, they should not show themselves there, and, for example, tea-brewing, which should be done on the spot, is in the hands of a younger male kinsman of the host. In fact, when a visitor arrives to whom they take an interest, they may find domestic work to do within earshot (though out of sight, of a small part of the house is clipped in as informant. The actual extent to which women contribute in shaping the opinions of their men is difficult to evaluate, and surely varies considerably, but is usually probably slight. On the other hand, they have access to information, especially gossip, [542, 573] [372]

which the head of the family has not, and may thus be of some importance. The main aggregations of women where such gossip is exchanged are found around the water-hole, where water for the house is fetched, and clothes washed and beaten. The actual visiting between women seems predominantly to be limited by kinship, most frequent are the daughter's visits to her mother. Such visiting is concentrated in the hours just before noon, when the men are occupied and there are no pressing household duties.

In everyday life, there are thus three types of larger groupings that provide a forum for factionalism and leadership: (a) the men of high prestige congregate in «the smokefilled room», (b) the men of low prestige get together in an informal «coffee society», and (c) the women of the community meet and gossip by the village water-hole. None of these groupings, however, pretend to be representative of the community as a whole, and none of them are primarily integrative in their function.

RITUAL UNITY OF THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

Mosque. The complete status hierarchy of individuals in the village only emerges clearly, and the effective integration of the community is only achieved, through the truly communal village activities. These will tend to be of a more formal and ritual type, and are more or less closely related to religion. In the villages in which a mosque is found, the most obvious occasion is the Friday sermon. However, the position of the mullah varies considerably, as indicated above; and many village mullahs find it difficult to make the occasion truly communal, to induce their villagers to attend sermons at the mosque — «they come home from the fields very tired, and would rather sit at home». Where a mullah of high prestige is found, he will manage to collect a considerable fraction of the village around him on such occasions, and by religious teaching raise the standard of the population, as measured on the scale of learning and piety. This in turn reflects on the village as a whole, the pressure to attend Friday sermons increases, and a unity and

7: Barth E-S (1951) 1953 MA11 Kurd MA11

functioning in these fields, the data is incomplete; moreover, the relative importance of various qualifications seem to differ somewhat between the infra-village and supra-village levels, and between the tribal and feudal organizations.

The impediment of female sex. The clearest case, illustrating the type of problem I am concerned with, relates to the position of the women who, except for her sex, fulfills all the requirements of a leader. I have previously stated that the woman plays no active part in political life in the widest sense. On the village level, that seems to be invariably true. But on the supra-village level, there are some exceptions. The problem, in the Kurdish system, amounts to what should take precedence, the impediment of female sex, or the qualifications of high family status, wealth, etc. In the village, the differences in family status and wealth are not great enough to counterbalance an obverse difference in sex; among the leading families of Southern Kurdistan, these differences in status and wealth as compared to the general population become great enough to override the impediment of female sex, and in several cases women have emerged as leaders of considerable consequence.

The most spectacular case was that of *Adela Khanum*, leader of the Jaf confederacy around the time of the First World War. She belonged to the ruling lineage of Ardalan princes in the southern provinces of Persian Kurdistan, and married Osman Pasha, the leader of the sedentary section of the Jaf. To him, she was of assistance in administration etc., and upon his death she retained or assumed the position as leader of the Jaf *Begzada*. Soane (op. cit.) after his visit with her before Osman Pasha's death, speaks very highly of her, both as a person and as a ruler. In 1919, she is described as «. . . about 40 years of age, but, thanks to the skillful, though liberal, use of artificial aids, she did not look a day over 40». (Lees, 1928, p. 257). In the conflicts following the war, she pursued an independent policy of cooperation with the British and opposition to Shaikh Mahmud.

A contemporary example is *Hafsakhan*, cousin and sister-in-law of Shaikh Mahmud. As a young girl, in the critical period of Shaikh Mahmud's rebellion, she assumed the responsibility for a handful of imprisoned British officers, in order to protect them from Kurdish

7: Barth E-5 (1951) 1953 NA11 Kurd NA11

irregulars. The just treatment extended to these prisoners was later the official British grounds for commuting Shaikh Mahmud's death sentence to life-long exile (later commuted further).

Hafsukhan has since retained a prominent position in Sulaimani, and today receives visitors of both sexes in her own gardens, independent of her husband, Shaikh Kader. A small, dark-haired, attractive woman, she shows a social grace and intelligence that fully justifies her reputation.

Women who are active in the political field remain the exception, however, even among the most prominent families. It would seem that in addition to exceptional ability as well as interest — and the latter is probably fairly rare too — somewhat unusual circumstances are required to give a woman the opportunity to enter publicly into political life. Adela Khanem did so as the trusted representative and later widow of Osman Pasha, and surely gained popularity in Ottoman times from her Persian origin; Hafsukhan showed wise resolution in a situation for which there was no clear precedence. But the mere fact that such women are found at all in Modern Kurdistan indicates the very great prestige attached to their other qualifications, primarily the fact of membership in the prominent families to which they belong.

The impediment of low birth. A second impediment to leadership is that of low birth, or, in the tribal system, descent from a non-lineage member. This, just as female sex, does not seem ever to be an absolute impediment that can not be out-weighed by qualifications in other fields. Status in Kurdish society is certainly in part inherited, and descent from prominent persons is a contributory qualification to leadership, but does not seem in any political context to be an absolute *requirement*.

Before external administration «from» the formerly fluid feudal hierarchies of Southern Kurdistan, there were constant changes in personnel and organization of territories. Political power was roughly related to land ownership — obviously, since land was passed on in family lines, political hierarchies may be spoken of in terms of «dynasties». But there were only practical, no fundamental, difficulties preventing a laborer's son from working his way up

the sons of Sheikh Said and Sheikh Mahmud. Thus, while no one who is not a member of the lineage can achieve a position within the segmentary lineage system, the lineage group as a whole, or even a section of it, temporarily broken away from the remainder of the descent group, can join a larger confederacy under a charismatic leader.

In summary, one might say that there are no absolute impediments, or, inversely, necessary requirements, relating to leadership in any of the Southern Kurdish political systems; that persons theoretically may qualify for leadership by any combination of part-statuses, so long as they add up to a total status position sufficiently exalted to correspond to, or qualify, the political and other demands involved in leading the group in question.

INCOMPATIBILITY OF PART-STATUSES

Clearly, only ascribed status positions, based on sex and birth, could function as true impediments to leadership. Various achieved status positions may be incompatible with high political positions, but since such status positions can be changed, they are at most temporary impediments, and can better be discussed under the process heading.

Most of these incompatibilities have been suggested above. Of the part-statuses in the religious field, the mullah will tend to be rather separated from the general village community — he is frequently a tenant farmer, but rarely occupies any other part-status position, with the occasional exception of *Hadji*. Membership in a dervish brotherhood is clearly a badge of low class, and the dervish will not occupy any of the higher status positions. Conversely, the title of *Hadji* is a badge of high status, and is combined with any of the higher part-status positions, including that of the mullah. A woman can not be a mullah.

The hierarchy of class, as implied in the discussion, seems to divide the local community into separable categories that do not significantly overlap in terms of prestige or general position in the village and supra-village hierarchy.

not be characteristic. The consumption of sugar, tea and coffee is to be a large extent confined to the Kurd Dasht and it is important to recognise that these are the principle items of ordinary consumption that have to be paid for in cash. In the simple fruits, wheat, rice, meat, fowls, etc. each small community can be largely self supporting it is only the luxury foodstuffs associated with the Kurd Dasht which have to be paid for in cash. The effect of this upon the general economic organisation will be discussed presently.

Meanwhile it should be noted again how clearly linked from the Kurdish standpoint is the upkeep of the Kurd Dasht and the upkeep of the Aghas household in general. This attitude is not an inconsistent one as it first appears. Although the essentials never appear in the Kurd Dasht, it is they who do all the work connected with it. It is the women who milk the goats and prepare the curd (a milk product similar to yoghourt), it is the women who make the bread and do all the cooking - and all this is work for several pairs of hands. In the commoner's house one wife alone can readily enough accomplish all the work required of her, but the hospitality undertaken by an Agha in his Kurd Dasht involves the work of a number of women, and this is consistent with the fact that the Agha's household is normally the only polygamous group in the community.

A further point to be noted in this connection is that not only does the Agha's household include an abnormal proportion of women, but that the upkeep of these women is much more expensive than the average. In the Balik area nearly all the males here their clothes made from locally woven cloths over the Aghas and their sons, though enjoying better quality materials than the commoners, which mainly by Kurdish cloth and wear the fancy clothing adopted by townsfolk and the Aghas of the plain. This appears to be due to their economic position rather than to economic necessity. A nephew of the Agha of Sapni was seen wearing a suit of ordinary Scottish style but made of obviously expensive imported cloth in plain bright colours, - this was much admired, but on the same time a trader from Rowanduz, who was wearing a rig out of the cheap gaudily striped Japanese cloth typical of that Eastern Bazaars, was held up to ridicule as a man of no taste. Similarly, as the accessories are at present, neither the commoner nor the Agha incurs much cash expenditure in connection with his own clothes, but for the womenfolk it is different. In the old days they too were well satisfied with the simple clothes produced on the local looms, but now more and more they are learning eager for "Stylish and Suitable" - Japanese cotton prints for the commoners, Indian silks for the wives of Aghas. In part this is the inevitable result of the greater facilities for trading contact brought about by "pacification" and the building of the road, but the tendency was substantially accelerated by the [illegible]

* The more important Aghas often import entire supplies of cloth so as to avoid giving their guests the inferior cloth obtainable near [illegible].

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about forty and one hundred pounds. Her value will depend on her utility—her physical strength for manual labour, and her ability to make carpets, rugs, clothes and other things.

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Contrary to the practice in most Mohammedan countries the Kurdish women goes about openly and unveiled. She carries herself with a quiet dignity rivalling that of her menfolk. Although women are still regarded as chattels, the women in a Kurdish family have an appreciable influence over their spouses. The noblest of triumphant womanhood in Kurdistan was the famous Adela Khanum, who on the death of her husband took over the reins of chieftainship of the Jaf tribe when it was at the height of its wealth and power. She ruled it with a wisdom and firmness rivalling that of Queen Elizabeth.

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When education in a foreign tongue, 'European' clothes, and ruling type-writers are forced upon the Kurd by the threat of rattling machine-guns in the way

[56 B]

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resembling the chanter of a bagpipe and has often a plaintive air. Kurdish dancing, however, is by no means as strenuous as Scottish. Kurds and all other mountain dwellers in Kurdistan dance what is known as the chain-dance, similar to that which is, I believe, commonly seen in the Balkans. The dancers join hands and form a ring. The piper and a drummer with a sort of inner drum stand in the middle, and the dance consists of fairly intricate footwork while the circle moves slowly round. Often one dancer who fancy themselves as budding Nijinskys do solo dances inside the circle. Amongst the Kurds the men and women dance separately, but with the Christian sects the two sexes dance together. This does not mean, however, that Kurdish women are completely segregated or kept by themselves. As a matter of fact, they possess considerable freedom and may be seen gathering firewood, tending animals or engaged in other tasks on the mountainside, often far from their villages.

K [562]

Up to five years ago the Barzan district of Kurdistan retained all of its savage and primitive features. Government had not penetrated and Sheikh Ahmed, a religious fanatic, was dictator. With the help of his brothers and a standing army of several hundred men he completely dominated the impoverished inhabitants, who had the sheikh's bodyguard perpetually billeted on them and who had to provide them with food, clothing and tobacco and anything else they might fancy. Any protests on the part of the villagers were discouraged by the strongest methods. Such complete ascendancy did Sheikh Ahmed gain over his savage and illiterate people that they began to look upon him as a god and, though Moslems in name, turned their faces towards him in prayer rather than towards Mecca, as tradition demands. There was a Mullah in the district called Mullah Taj, who represented himself to be the prophet of this new god. The Mullah was a very fiery and eloquent speaker and, unfortunately for himself, his fame began to surpass even that of the deity. This could not of course be tolerated, and one of Sheikh Ahmed's brothers "bumped off" the presumptuous prophet. Up to that time the Koran had been revered, but now the Sheikh issued orders for the destruction of all copies to be found. He also withdrew the ban on the eating of pork, for wild pig were plentiful in Barzan. Armed missionaries were sent out beyond the Barzan bounds, and villages which refused to accept the Sheikh were burned and a number of the male inhabitants put to death. This state of affairs could not be allowed to continue, and the 'Iraq Government was forced to take action in conjunction with the British Royal Air Force.

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